

## Rafsanjani meets Hizbollah leader

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani met a leader of Lebanon's Hizbollah (Party of God) in Tehran Monday, amid renewed speculation about release of Western hostages held in Lebanon. The Iranian news agency IRNA said Mr. Rafsanjani discussed "the latest developments" in Lebanon with Sheikh Subhi Tofeili, Hizbollah secretary-general. Despite its denials, Hizbollah — financed by Iran — is widely thought to have been behind the kidnapping of most of the 12 Westerners believed held in Lebanon. IRNA said Mr. Rafsanjani praised the unity of Lebanon's Muslims against Israel and expressed satisfaction with the restoration of calm to Lebanon after more than 15 years of civil war. The Washington Post reported last week that the United States had contacted Iran with a view to talks about the six American hostages and other matters. The other six are three Britons, two Germans and an Italian. The U.S. State Department has said any improvement in relations with Tehran would depend on release of the Western hostages.

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## Crown Prince meets Hurd

LONDON (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday discussed with British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd the political situation in the Middle East region and efforts to ensure stability, security and peace as well as issues of common concern to Jordan and the United Kingdom. Prince Hassan, who is on a private visit to Britain in the course of a tour which will also take him to Canada and the United States, discussed with Mr. Hurd Jordanian-British relations. His Majesty King Hussein's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh attended the meeting. The Crown Prince Sunday delivered an address at Oxford University focusing his audience's attention on the need for the world community to work towards ensuring food security and preventing starvation. The Prince also dwelt on Middle East problems and the consequences of the Gulf war on the countries of the region.

## Lebanon gets U.S. weapons shipment

BEIRUT (AP) — The first shipment of U.S. arms to the Lebanese army since 1981 was unloaded at the northern port of Tripoli Monday and taken overland to the command headquarters east of Beirut. A Defence Ministry spokesman reported the shipment but gave no information on the types or amounts of weapons supplied. Port sources in Tripoli said nine containers of arms and ammunition were unloaded. The United States promised earlier this year to extend military assistance to help the Lebanese army replenish losses suffered in the country's nearly 16 years of civil war. U.S. arms shipments were halted in 1981 after the army split during the war.

## Israeli government survives vote

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's rightist government Monday easily survived a parliamentary no-confidence vote that focused on immigration policy and high unemployment. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's coalition defeated the four opposition motions 53-43 in the 120-seat parliament. Housing Minister Ariel Sharon defended the government's efforts to absorb an influx of Soviet Jewish immigrants, even though he briefly resigned this month as head of a ministerial immigration committee after criticising government red tape.

## Kurdish rebels active in Turkey

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (AP) — Separatist Kurdish guerrillas kidnapped a district official's wife and daughter, but later released them unharmed, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported Monday. In another incident, Kurdish insurgents attacked a police headquarters in southeastern Turkey with rocket-propelled grenades but withdrew when confronted with superior police firepower, Anatolia said. Also Sunday night, Kurdish separatists attacked a police headquarters in Kahramanmaraş, 371 kilometres west of here, with rocket-propelled grenades, triggering a 20-minute firefight, after which the insurgents escaped on foot, Anatolia said. No one was reported injured, the dispatch added.

## Ershad's trial begins today

DHAKA (AP) — The trial of deposed President Hussain Mohammad Ershad on charges of embezzlement and possession of illegal arms is scheduled to begin before a special tribunal Tuesday, officials said. Former army General Ershad seized power in a bloodless coup in March 1982 and lost power last December after weeks of popular street protest. He has since been interned in a house in Dhaka. Gen. Ershad participated in the February general elections and was elected to the 300-member parliament.

# Iraq says rebellion crushed, accuses rebels of bloodbaths

IRAQ'S newspapers said Monday the army had crushed the rebellion in the south by traitors they said had carried out bloodbaths and left cities in ruins. Rebel leaders in Damascus, however, claimed the uprising was still growing in the south and reported new fighting near Al Kut, about 160 kilometres south-east of Baghdad. Kurdish guerrillas said they were holding on to "gains" in the north. Travellers from Iraq said the army had set up checkpoints around Baghdad and every two to three kilometres on the highways south of the capital. Soldiers also reportedly had begun to search houses and cars in Baghdad for weapons. Bayan Jabr, a Damascus spokesman for the Shiite Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), claimed that Iraq was trying to regroup its forces in the capital and isolate rebels in the suburbs of Al Doura and Al Taji. He also reported new fighting near Al Kut and claimed the rebels had shot down two government helicopters. None of the claims could be verified independently. The army newspaper Al Qadisiyah reported Monday that anti-government riots had been crushed in the southern cities of Najaf, Karbala, Hilla, Ammar and in Dhi Qar province. Al Thawra, the ruling Baath

Arab Socialist Party newspaper, also said the rebellion had been crushed. It called the unrest sectarian turmoil that aimed at "destroying Iraq and dividing it into many entities and turning it into another Lebanon." "The enemies tried to portray the criminal and savage acts of these traitors as if it was a popular uprising to change the regime. No honest citizen could be deceived by this," it said. The newspapers said the rebels had killed innocent men, women and children and left towns and cities in ruins. Salam Al Shama, writing in the government newspaper Al Joumuriyah, said when he toured Karbala he saw bodies stacked in hospitals and blood everywhere. "Blood was painted on the streets and the walls of the city. It was all blood, blood, blood," he wrote. Al Qadisiyah said a soldier captured by the rebels in Najaf told the newspaper that he and other soldiers were held for 14 days without food or water in the basement of a school run by Shiite Ayatollah Abul Kasem Al Khoui, who reportedly issued an edict authorising a holy war against the government. Iraq also said that strategic stocks of food for its central and southern regions had been looted or destroyed in the unrest, compounding problems caused by a

U.N. trade embargo. "The foodstuff which has been looted... or set on fire constitutes all the strategic stocks for the citizens of the central and southern provinces," newspapers quoted Mohammad Mehdi Saleh as saying. "The hooligans have looted all food supplies and powdered baby milk from the ministry's warehouses and set on fire the quantities which they were not able to carry," he added. Mr. Saleh said large quantities of wheat provided by the government to privately-owned mills had been stolen, the mills put out of order and grain silos destroyed. The loss of the strategic stocks, he added, would increase Iraq's need for supplies of essential foods, depleted by the United Nations trade embargo, which has been in force since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August. The governor of the holy city of Najaf, 180 kilometres south of Baghdad, said the general hospital, one of the biggest in Iraq, had been badly damaged and had equipment stolen. Thabit Fahd Ali also reported damage to health centres, pharmacies, drugstores, schools and colleges, water and electricity networks and the city's main petrol station. He said many innocent people

## Arafat expects Arab Gulf states to resume financial aid to PLO

### PLO willing to talk with Israel under the auspices of U.N. Security Council

PARIS (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said in an interview published Monday that he expected Arab Gulf states which cut off funds to the Palestine Liberation Organisation during the Gulf war because of his support for Iraq would resume financial aid. Mr. Arafat, speaking in Tunis, also told the newspaper Le Figaro that Iraq was not militarily defeated and indicated the PLO was no longer demanding a full-scale Middle East peace conference. Asked whether he expected resumed financial aid from Gulf states angered by PLO backing for Baghdad during the Gulf war, Arafat said: "Yes and it's only a question of time." "Time fixes everything. Remember Egypt was chased from the Arab family of nations in 1978

but today the seat of the Arab League is back in Cairo. The Middle East is an area of shifting sands," he said. Mr. Arafat, who predicted before the war that a conflict would last for years if it broke out, disagreed that the coalition allies beat Iraq on the battlefield. "The only real allied ground battle was against the Republican Guard west of Basra. Iraqi resistance lasted more than 40 hours and the allies were unable to enter Basra. For me that is not enough to speak of a coalition victory. "If Iraq had wanted to, it could have continued the ground war ... Iraq could very well have left one or two brigades in Kuwait City to continue urban guerrilla warfare and the war would have lasted

another month," Mr. Arafat said. He also indicated the PLO no longer insisted on a full-blown international peace conference to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Told the U.S. rejected such a gathering, Mr. Arafat replied: "OK," he added: "(So) I accept (French) President Francois Mitterrand's offer of Israeli-Palestinian dialogue under the auspices of the U.N. Security Council to apply its resolutions." Mr. Arafat said Security Council presence was necessary if he negotiated with Israel "because I want guarantees and I need the pressure of the big five powers on Israel." He rejected a separate peace between Israel and Arab states before the Palestinian issue was

## Israel ready to push peace with Syria without returning Golan

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Monday that Israel's offer of unconditional negotiations with Syria did not necessarily mean it was willing to cede territory. Mr. Shamir was trying to explain remarks by Health Minister Ehud Olmert, who suggested a willingness to negotiate with Syria about the Golan Heights. Mr. Shamir told reporters that "what (Olmert) meant to say was that if there are negotiations with Israel, they (Syria) will meet and can say to us, 'we want the Golan Heights,' and we will say, 'we won't give them to you.' That's negotiations." Asked what remained to be negotiated if Israel's mind was already made up on the territorial question, Mr. Shamir said: "We can talk about peace, about the ways of peace, about economic cooperation. There are many things." He added: "I don't know many countries in the world that are willing to negotiate with each other over territories that belong

to one of them. I don't know of such an example in the world." Israel argues that until 1967, Syrian artillery on the Golan Heights shelled Israeli towns and villages below, and that the territory is therefore vital for Israel's "security." Until recently, a settlement looked unlikely, given Syria's hard-line attitude to Israel. But following Syria's participation in the anti-Iraq coalition, and its apparent new openness to U.S. diplomacy, the prospect of negotiations has resurfaced. Yossi Ben Aharon, director general of Mr. Shamir's office, said that at present there was nothing to talk about, but he indicated that Syrian recognition of Israel's existence, and a willingness to negotiate peace, would radically alter the picture. "If they really come to negotiate, that means they recognise our right to exist as a state in the Middle East. That will be a revolutionary change in Syria's position," he said on Israel Radio.

In such a case, he said, "there is something to talk about." Even then, Mr. Ben Aharon said, Israel would not necessarily give up land. Dore Gold, an analyst at the Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies, recalled that Israel took a similarly firm stance against retreating from the Sinai Desert until Egyptian President Anwar Sadat paid a visit to Jerusalem. That gesture peaceful intent launched negotiations that won back the Sinai for Egypt less than five years later. Mr. Olmert, a prominent spokesman for Mr. Shamir's Likud bloc, told American Jewish lobbyists in Washington Sunday night: "We are ready to negotiate on all of the issues, all of the claims, all of the demands, including the territorial demands of the Syrians." Mr. Olmert later explained on Israel Radio: "If we say we are ready to negotiate with Syria, and the Syrians raise the issue of the



ENOUGH TO GO AROUND: Shoppers crowd the vegetable market in downtown Amman as the country marked the second day of Ramadan Monday (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

## Bush vows to press for Mideast peace

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. President George Bush Monday consulted with Secretary of State James Baker and vowed to press for a permanent peace in the Middle East. Mr. Bush also said Iraq must pay reparations for its "environmental terrorism" against Kuwait. The meeting came after Mr. Baker's 10-day diplomatic trip to the Middle East and the Soviet Union. Mr. Bush, himself back from a five-day trip abroad to consult with major allies, met with Mr. Baker for 45 minutes at the White House.

Mr. Bush said Mr. Baker had returned "hopeful that we can move forward. And we are certainly going to try. We are not going to miss this opportunity." In setting the high goal of establishing a permanent ceasefire in the Gulf, solving the Arab-Israeli conflict and settling Lebanon's civil war, Mr. Bush said: "I don't think the American people ought to think that you can wave a wand and solve all three of these very difficult problems at once." But Mr. Bush said he was determined to move quickly, saying, "the longer one waits to take any initiatives, the danger is things revert back to a status quo, and I think that will be unacceptable." He said there was no date set yet for his own trip to the Middle East, which has been rumoured to take place as early as the third week of April.

Mr. Bush spoke with reporters after receiving a humanitarian award from Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel. Asked about the strife in Iraq, Mr. Bush said rebel fighting against the government had been reported in Baghdad, as well as in the north and south. He also said Iraq must compensate Kuwait for allegedly setting hundreds of oil fields ablaze as it withdrew from the emirate (Bush seeks tough ceasefire terms, page 2). "Iraq must pay reparations or pay damages, and the more one looks at the environmental terrorism that they embraced, the more the world understands that they have got to do something about it," said Mr. Bush. Mr. Bush returned to the White House Sunday evening from Bermuda after stopping in Sumter, South Carolina, to attend his first homecoming for Desert Storm troops. In Bermuda, Mr. Bush met with British Prime Minister John Major on Saturday.

## Amnesty says Palestinians being tortured in Kuwait

LONDON (R) — Amnesty International said Monday it feared Palestinians in Kuwait were being arbitrarily arrested and tortured by armed Kuwaiti soldiers and civilians. Torture methods included beatings with canes, cables, rifles and rods, as well as electric shock treatment and having cigarettes extinguished on parts of the body, Amnesty said. The London-based human rights group called for an investigation into the alleged abuses, which included the detention of several hundred Palestinians. "It is too early for us to be able to confirm many of these human rights violations," Amnesty said in a statement. "But the growing

number of reports points to a pattern of abuses that must be open to urgent and independent investigation." Since Kuwait was liberated ending the Gulf war there had been disturbing reports that Palestinians, Sudanese and Iraqis had been arbitrarily picked up and tortured, Amnesty added. Some were targeted because they were suspected of collaborating with Iraqi troops and others apparently because of their nationality. In the past week the Kuwaiti military authorities had expelled scores of Palestinians to Iraq, Amnesty said. Amnesty welcomed steps by the United Nations to probe

alleged human rights abuses by Iraqi forces during their occupation of Kuwait. Allowing the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) immediately access to all detainees was one way to ensure they would not be tortured or ill-treated, Amnesty added. Jordanians tortured, expelled Seven Jordanians arrived in Baghdad from Kuwait Sunday after a week-long journey on foot and told reporters they had been detained for no reason, beaten up and tortured before being deported. (Continued on page 5)

## Gorbachev falls short of big mandate for 'renewed' union

MOSCOW (R) — Early returns Monday from the Soviet referendum showed only limited support for President Mikhail Gorbachev's proposed new union, especially in Moscow and the increasingly restive Ukraine. The Sunday poll failed to give Mr. Gorbachev the ringing endorsement he wanted of a "renewed union" of socialist republics, a victim to the forces pulling the country apart. A host of supplementary referendum questions, changes in the wording of the Kremlin proposal and boycotts made it almost certain that final results, due by law within 10 days, will do little to ease the vexing "national question."

supported Mr. Gorbachev's new blueprint. But with a turnout of 65 per cent, that meant support among all eligible Muscovites was below 34 per cent. In the Ukrainian capital Kiev, only 44 per cent of voters supported the union plan, with 78 per cent backing a separate second proposal for a fully sovereign Ukraine within the union. Leningrad, like Moscow and Kiev under the control of radical opposition leaders, offered Mr. Gorbachev some relief — 69.8 per cent supported his proposal. But in the two biggest republics, the Russian Federation and the Ukraine, "Yes" votes to the main referendum question on the future union were offset by vo-

ters' endorsement of supplementary proposals that conflict with the Kremlin's. The separatist hotbed of western Ukraine crushed the Gorbachev proposal, giving overwhelming support instead to a fully independent republic. In the city of Lvov, on the Polish border, 88.3 per cent backed full independence, while Mr. Gorbachev's plan won support from only 24.8 per cent of voters. The Ukrainian result appeared to undermine Mr. Gorbachev's attempt to tame nationalist fervour with his offer of a "renewed" union that would devolve more power from the centre. In the rich republic of Kazakh-

## Belgrade seeks to avert total collapse, calls federal meeting

BELGRADE (Agencies) — Yugoslavia's state presidency, crippled by its worst crisis since World War II, called on Monday for an urgent meeting of federal leaders and the heads of the six republics to halt a slide towards civil war. Central government is paralysed after three of the eight members of the presidency, including President Borisav Jovic, quit Friday after five days of street protests and months of ethnic tension. The collective presidency, the highest constitutional body, said it would meet Thursday and invited the heads of the Balkan federation's bitterly divided six republics and two provinces to attend. "All who do not show up for the presidency meeting on March 21 will be held responsible before their own nation and the world because the only alternative to continuing dialogue is war," said Milan Kucan, president of the Republic of Slovenia. The two biggest republics, Serbia and Croatia, have mobilised police and militia reserves and many politicians say Yugoslavia, a volatile mix of competing ethnic groups, is heading for civil war. The country was calm but some areas were tense Monday. "We are at the edge. The army must pull back (from any confrontation)," said Vasily Tupurkovski, Macedonia's representative on the presidency. Serbian President Slobodan

Milosevic has said his republic, which is ruled by renamed communists, no longer accepts the authority of the collective presidency. Serbia's parliament met Monday to consider a proposal by Mr. Milosevic, a fiery Serbian nationalist, to remove the representative of Kosovo province from the presidency. If this happened, the presidency would be reduced to only four members. Serbia's increasingly assertive opposition parties have demanded the replacement of the Serbian government and described Mr. Milosevic's actions as desperate attempts to divert public attention from a disastrous political and economic situation.







## U.N. agencies staff ordered back

By Elia Nasrallah  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — International staff working for the Amman-based regional office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) have been ordered back here from Cyprus and Cairo where they had been staying during the Gulf war, but only two of them have so far returned to Amman, the United Nations office said here Monday.

The two are Dr. Hamid Al Khawwad, who is serving as acting regional director following the departure of Mr. Mohammad Kazem at the end of his mandate, and Hubert de Toustain, the administrative officer.

U.N. officials told the Jordan Times that the other four international staff are expected in Amman by Wednesday, although some 25 local employees working for UNESCO have already resumed their jobs after a break of several weeks during which they were temporarily suspended from work and turned over to the Ministry of Education.

UNESCO Director General in Paris Federico Mayor last week ordered the Amman international staff to return to their offices here now that the Gulf war was over.

UNESCO international staff left Jordan by Jan. 10 and the offices were closed by Jan. 15. The Jordan Times contacted

the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) regional office in Amman and learnt that none of the essential international staff had left the country during the Gulf war, but their dependents did, along with the expatriate staff (those from Lebanon). The dependents and the expatriates have all now returned to work in Amman, UNICEF officials said.

The other United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), did not order any of their international staff to leave.

UNRWA's director for Jordan, Franke de Tonge, told the Jordan Times last month that his agency and UNICEF had actually increased their staff to cope with the ensuing situation.

At the time when the UNESCO staff were ordered out, Dr. Ali Atiga, U.N. resident representative, said that he was making contacts for their quick return.

The situation in Jordan, he said, was stable and tranquil, encouraging everyone to remain.

With regard to the World Health Organisation (WHO) office here, U.N. officials said that the three international staff attached to it have been told to return after an absence during the Gulf war. The officials said that one has already returned and the other two are expected here any time. Meanwhile, the local staff work as normal during the Gulf crisis.

## Sit-in at the hospital gets backing from professional unions, parliamentarians

### Jordan University Hospital doctors, nurses plan strike for better conditions

By Odeh Odeh  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — More than 100 doctors and specialists in addition to 400 male and female nurses employed by the Jordan University Hospital Monday staged a brief sit-in at the hospital to back demands for better conditions, and have planned a day-long strike on Wednesday if their demands were still not met.

The strikers are protesting a management decision to reduce their salaries and to deny them the daily free meals they used to have, according to a committee elected to speak on the strikers' behalf.

The committee said that the strike on Wednesday, which will take effect from 10 in the morning and until one in the after-

noon, should serve as a warning to the management and would be repeated later until the demands are met.

Doctors who used to receive JD 235 in monthly salary have had their pay reduced to JD 175 over the past two years, and all the staff of doctors and nurses have been denied free meals, the committee noted.

Furthermore, each internist is expected to stay on duty from 8 a.m. on one day until 5 p.m. of the following day, a very rigorous programme which tends to create frustrations, the committee added.

It said that the other demands included a halt to arbitrary dismissals and threats against doctors and nurses that contracts would not be renewed should any complaints about conditions be

raised. The sit-in took place in the presence of seven presidents of various Jordanian professional unions and three members of Parliament. Dr. Mamdouh Al Abbadi, president of the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA), backed the strikers and said that their demands were just and should be met.

Dr. Abbadi said that JMA supported the work stoppage as a show of protest backing the strikers' demands.

Parliament Deputy Fakhri Kawa urged the hospital management to rescind what he called arbitrary decisions, and reach an agreement with the doctors and nurses so that they can perform their jobs and serve the patients better.

## Doctors, charity activists say health situation in Iraq desperate

By Mariam M. Shahin  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The 19th medical convoy organised by the Jordanian Red Crescent since Jan. 17 left for Baghdad Monday afternoon amid increased worry that due to changing weather conditions and the continuing lack of basic services epidemics may spread in the war-ravaged country.

Two German physicians representing Komitee Cap Anamur (German emergency doctors) accompanied the convoy which carried \$70,000 worth of medicine, mostly anaesthetics, painkillers and operations equipment to Baghdad.

Setting off the convoy, which was followed by 19 other German physicians, some of Iraqi origin from municipal medical associations, and three members of the Gulf Peace Team, was Dr. Mohammad Al Hadid, vice-president of the Jordanian Red Crescent, who only recently returned from Iraq.

Of his three-day visit to Iraq, Dr. Hadid said it was "impossible to even make estimates of the number of cholera and typhoid cases in the country because communications are non-existent."

According to Dr. Hadid, distances are big and the communications system in Baghdad and in the rural areas has been completely destroyed.

Dr. Hadid told the Jordan Times that the need for certain medication in Iraq was "desperate" and he pointed out that the estimate of the medical assistance received by the Iraqi people since Aug. 2 does not exceed \$15 million. "For a country that imported \$700 million a year in medicines, that is less than is required by a long shot," Dr. Hadid said.

He said patients suffering from diabetes, chronic heart diseases or other chronic illnesses were not able to receive treatment in most cases and had to suffer the consequences.

"Hospitals often have to do without running water and electricity. If you can imagine what that means then you have a pretty clear picture of what it's like," Dr. Hadid said.

At the time Dr. Hadid returned to Jordan, four days ago, he said that the hospital in Al Ramadi, on the way from Baghdad to the Jordanian border, was still not functional because the generator had broken down.

Dr. Hadid said that during his visit he had been particularly touched by the plight of Luma Fahmy, a mother of a seven-year-old boy who had lost his eye. "They had to stitch up his eye without the use of anaesthetic and now he refuses to play with the other children because he is ashamed of having only one eye. The mother approached a group of foreign doctors who were visiting Iraq on a fact-finding mission to ask for an artificial eye for her son."

The story of Luma Fahmy is only one of thousands, Dr. Hadid said.

Iraq would not be able to afford the medicines it needs, the doctor said, and without humanitarian help the fate of thousands of Iraqis would remain bleak. Dr. Hadid said that some governments gave humanitarian aid, but it was like a "grain of dust in the desert." "The Japanese, for example, gave \$2 million dollars in humanitarian help which is good, but not if you compare it with the \$9 billion that they gave to the coalition forces.... You pay \$2 million to assist someone and \$9 billion to kill them? there is no balance... and that's just one example," Dr. Hadid said.

Hadid said.

"The world," said the Jordanian doctor, "is trying to help a village of 100,000 inhabitants with the help that is going but this village has 18 million inhabitants... they need massive help, both in medicine and food supplies and yesterday not tomorrow."

The U.N.-sponsored economic embargo that has been in effect since August and continues to be in effect has prevented, among other things, the delivery of thousands of tonnes of foodstuff that had already been paid for by the Iraqi government before August 2.

A representative of Nestle company in Germany came to me and told me about the 1,595 tonnes of milk that are still waiting to go to Baghdad since August 2, what is happening is unbelievable," Dr. Hadid said. He said that the Red Crescent hopes to follow in the footsteps of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which will send milk, flour, rice and tea as soon as they get official clearance.

Accompanying Dr. Hadid on his three-day visit were delegates from the American and British Save the Children Federation, OXFAM — a charity organisation, Care International and members of the Gulf Peace Team.

Dr. Hadid said that even though it was difficult to collect data on the number of medical cases or the needy because of the destruction of the communications services, the delegates had got "a fairly clear idea of what was needed in Iraq and would spread the word."

"Iraq has been sent back into the Middle Ages and now we have to help them back into this century in any way we can," he concluded.

## Television to show report on effects of Gulf war on families

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Television Tuesday evening presents a report featuring a survey conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in

Jordan during the Gulf crisis.

The programme, to be presented in the course of a family programme on channel one at 7:30 p.m., focuses attention on

the consequences of the Gulf war on Jordanian children coming from low and middle income families.

The programme includes interviews with children who draw sketches expressing their impressions about the war, and with Dr. Muhieddin Touq, a professor of psychology at the University of Jordan who will tackle the psychological effects of the war on children of the region.

UNICEF's report, which was released on March 7, was prepared at the end of a two-month survey following trips conducted by UNICEF's teams to different parts of Jordan.

The report, compiled in a booklet entitled "Jordanian Children in the Eye of the Storm," depicts the condition of a variety of families and their children affected by the war directly or indirectly.

The report found that almost one million Jordanians have slipped

## Illegal workers face expulsion

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Labour Monday embarked on a nationwide campaign to crack down on non-Jordanians working illegally in the Kingdom and said that violators would be asked to leave the country within two weeks unless they conform to regulations.

A total of 6,000 non-Jordanian workers have been found to be working for years in bakeries around the country, most without work permits, and are indebted to the treasury by JD 2 million, according to Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Dughmi.

"These workers will have to pay their dues to the government immediately or leave the country within a fortnight," said the minister at a meeting held on the eve of the campaign which, according to ministry sources, will cover all parts of the country.

Directors of labour and employment departments around the country attended the meeting and heard the minister's directives concerning the non-Jordanian workers.

"The Ministry of Labour will not be lenient with the violators of the Jordanian Labour Law and will not tolerate the presence of workers working illegally in Jordan," said the minister at the meeting.

"Should the ministry be forced to ask the non-Jordanian workers to leave, the cost of the repatriation would be shouldered by the employers who are accomplices in the violation of the law," the minister said.

Mr. Dughmi instructed depart-



Abdul Karim Al Dughmi

ment directors to launch campaigns in their areas to ensure the non-Jordanians carry valid work permits and to report their findings to the ministry which will then take action.

The meeting followed another one by the Employment Committee chaired by Mr. Dughmi himself. The committee met to review applications by employers for the employment of 205 non-Jordanians, but most of the applications were rejected as it had been found that the would-be jobs could easily be filled by local workers, according to a ministry official.

The committee reported that more and more Jordanians had been applying for jobs previously assumed by non-Jordanians. According to the officials, many of these job-seekers were gradu-

ates of community colleges who were applying for jobs in the transport sector, restaurants, hotels and petrol stations.

"This is a very encouraging sign," said the minister upon hearing the report. "We are trying to find work for the job-seekers to reduce unemployment in the country and would not hesitate to take any proper measure to help achieve that goal," Mr. Dughmi said.

Ministry officials said earlier this month that 600 non-Jordanians were asked to leave the country since the beginning of 1991 in implementation of directives by the Labour Ministry's Employment Committee's recommendations. These non-Jordanians have been found to be working illegally here and declined to conform to the Labour Law and regulations, the officials said.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran last month instructed the Ministry of Labour to undertake all possible measures to find work for Jordanian job-seekers who can take the place of non-Jordanians. The Labour Ministry's Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) has been offering short-term training courses to job-seekers to enable them to assume work in different fields, including bakeries.

Towards the end of last year, the Ministry of Labour reported the presence of at least 150,000 foreign workers in Jordan, but the new crackdown campaign is expected to immensely reduce the number.

## Officials are optimistic about future of tourism in Jordan

By Nur Sati  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — During the seven month Gulf crisis when virtually all sectors in the country halted activity, tourism was the first to get hit. But it will also be the first to get back on its feet, tourism specialists believe.

Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism Masri Attalah said: "The priority now is to see how we are going to get Scandinavian charters back." In 1989, when tourism was heading towards a boom, Scandinavian charters flew into Amman twice a week, Mr. Attalah told the Jordan Times. "In December, January and February they even flew in three times a week," he added.

Chartered flights may not come in as frequent as in 1989, but he is optimistic that a significant number of Scandinavians will come to Jordan this year. "What we are facing now is competition with neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Syria, Cyprus, Turkey and Israel," he stated, explaining that the consequence is that prices drop, "which means we have to reassess the prices for 1991 in order to reprimote Jordan in Europe."

Aside from concentrating on Scandinavian countries, the Ministry of Tourism is putting great emphasis on the Spanish market. "There is a great demand," Mr. Attalah asserted.

According to the ministry, the Royal Jordanian (RJ) office in

Madrid has requested 18 flights from Madrid.

Jordan's private sector, working closely with the ministry, will be launching seminars and workshops, travel to the right locations in Spain and meet with tour operators in order to reassure the safety of Jordan, according to the general secretary. "We will also be inviting travel agents and tour operators to the country to see firsthand the stability of the country. We hope the market will pay back by 1991," Mr. Attalah said.

Another large market is Japan, according to the ministry, but the campaign should be large. There is competition from Turkey, Greece, Syria, Egypt and Israel, whose airlines fly to Japan, according to tourism officials. Jordan, although it has worked hard on that market, is facing a handicap because RJ does not fly to Tokyo, Mr. Attalah said. "It is up to us to meet that challenge," he added, "through making agreements with airlines that land in Tokyo."

Other target countries include Germany and Italy.

During the Gulf crisis and the war, hotels, souvenir shops and tourist guides suffered tremendously. "There are 180 guides who lived solely on tourists; many were left without any work for seven months," Mr. Attalah told the Jordan Times. "But they are also the quickest of the services sectors to recuperate," he added. In many hotels, workers left or they were given holidays without pay. But the Ministry of Tourism has been assured that these services are getting back on their feet.

Does Jordan expect a boom for the coming months of 1991? "Though hotels are ready to accommodate great numbers this year, we cannot expect to reach

the 1989 figures," Mr. Attalah said. According to the ministry, 1989 was an excellent year as Jordan witnessed 72,000 tourists groups.

In the first six months of 1990, the figure rose another 40 per cent. Then the Gulf crisis and the war took over, the losses for 1990 were put at \$250 million. By 1991 the losses were estimated at \$450 million. "We can recover about 30 to 40 per cent (JD 100 million) of that amount and that will be good," Mr. Attalah said. In 1992 and 1993 Jordan's tourist influx is expected to hit the 1989 figures, according to Mr. Attalah.

The ministry hopes that during the September-October tourist season European flights would resume to Amman.

Throughout the years, local tourism increased significantly. One of the main reasons for the sudden burst is because local people were given a good deal in Amman, according to Mr. Attalah. "Before, all the hotels were booked by foreign tourists and Jordanians did not have much chance except to head for Amman in the summer," he said. During recent years however, they were at Amman in all seasons.

More recently, ever since the ceasefire in the Gulf, more local tourists have headed for Amman. In the coming holiday, after Ramadan, the hotels are fully booked, with large numbers of people on the waiting list.

The Dead Sea hotel, earlier this month, reported that it ran out of food for the local tourists who spent the weekend over. "Local tourism is picking up fast," one hotel employee said.

Tourism in general this year, may not be what it was in previous years, but tourism officials maintain that the demand is extremely high for this part of the region.

### HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Royal decree endorses loan

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal decree was issued Monday endorsing a loan agreement signed between the Jordanian and French governments. Under the terms of the agreement the French government will provide Jordan with a loan amounting to 100 million French francs to finance buying French goods and services.

#### Ministry congratulates leaders, people

AMMAN (Petra) — On the occasion of the start of the holy month of Ramadan the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs issued a statement Monday in which it congratulated His Majesty, King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Jordanian people and the Arab and Muslim Nation. The statement called the Muslim Nation to unify its ranks and to abide by the teachings of Islam. The month of Ramadan, the statement said, reminds us of Islam's holy book, the Koran, which is read and strengthened the nation. "This holy month also reminds us of our duty towards Jerusalem and Palestine as well as towards Iraq," the statement added.

#### French Red Cross willing to aid JNRCS

AMMAN (J.T.) — The inspector general of the French Red Cross Monday expressed the readiness of his society to extend assistance to the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) to aid it in its humanitarian efforts. In a tour of the JNRCS evacuee camps in Al Azaqa region, the French official lauded the humanitarian role carried out by JNRCS in assisting evacuees who came to Jordan from Iraq and Kuwait following Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. Director of the JNRCS camps Bassam Al Hadid briefed the French official on the services the Jordanian society provided for evacuees since Aug. 2, 1990. Mr. Hadid said the society carried out major relief operations in cooperation with the International League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the camps which received more than 150,000 evacuees of various nationalities.

#### Bank grants loan to Irbid municipality

AMMAN (Petra) — Cities and Villages Development Bank decided in a meeting it held Sunday to extend a JD 240,000 loan to Irbid Municipality. The loan will be used to finance the municipality's complex project.

#### Doctor granted foundation award

AMMAN (Petra) — The World Health Organisation (WHO) decided to grant the award of Dr. Ali Shushah Foundation to Dr. Mohammad Rida Tawfiq, director of the Health Ministry's Malaria and Schistosomiasis Department in appreciation of his efforts and significant contribution to developing the health situation in the Eastern Mediterranean region. WHO Executive Council has set May 9, 1991 as the date for Dr. Tawfiq to receive the award.

#### Refinery sales drop

AMMAN (Petra) — The sales of the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. dropped by 12 per cent last February compared to the same month in 1990. The company has sold 466,040 metric tonnes of oil derivatives in February 1991, while in February 1990 it sold 533,853 metric tonnes, which means a 87,963 metric tonnes drop in 1991.

## Gorbachev

(Continued from page 1)

stan, voters gave strong support to the proposed new union but only after local officials rewrote the question to put more emphasis on republican sovereignty.

There was also trouble in the troubled Tyumen oil region, where TASS news agency said only 53 per cent of votes cast backed Mr. Gorbachev.

Six republics refused outright to hold the referendum, forcing minority voters like the substantial Russian-speaking residents of the Baltic republics and Moldova to vote at military units and factories under Moscow's control.

In the confusion, journalists in Estonia and Latvia said they were allowed to vote more than once at "unofficial" polling stations. There were reports elsewhere of incentives paid to voters.

## Israel

(Continued from page 1)

Golan and we are not even prepared to discuss it, is that serious? Can we say this?"

Mr. Olmert said Israel was ready to pursue "a two-track strategy for peace" with all Arab states.

"Right away, Israel is prepared, is offering to sit to the table with each one of these countries and negotiate immediate peace," Olmert said.

He added that negotiations could start at the same time "with proper Palestinian representatives" in search of a peace agreement.

Mr. Olmert emphasised that Israel was not prepared to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

## New journalists sworn-in

AMMAN (J.T.) — A group of 24 new Jordanian journalists Monday was sworn in as members of the Jordan Press Association (JPA) at a ceremony attended by Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin, JPA President Hashem Khreisat, and association members.

Mr. Izzeddin delivered a speech at the swearing-in ceremony underlining the role of the media in contributing towards the advancement of society in general. He urged journalists to be committed to their profession and to try to offer the best possible service to their country benefiting from the democratic atmosphere which offers greater freedom of expression.

Mr. Khreisat voiced the association's appreciation to the minister for his continued support for the media and the Jordanian journalists. He also outlined several issues which the local journalists face.

The following journalists took the oath to join the association: Tareq Momani, Omar Fayyumi, Nadia Fakhoum, Issa Eshboul, Abdul Hamid Yunes, Fairuz Mubayyeddin, Mustafa Abu Lab-

deh, Samirah Awad, Arap Hiyasat, Abdullah Tawalbeh, Abdul Munem Abu Touq, Abdul Rahim Ghannam, Maha Qataneh, Iyad Al Waqfi, Tayseer Ourani, Saqer Abu Shattal, Abdul Khaleq Momani, Rashid Abu Gheida, Attallah Huneiti, Elitar Khawaneh, Deeb, Ghazaleh, Mamoon Baidoun, Lamis Barghouti and Nayef Talaq.

The swearing-in took place only days before the convening of the association's general assembly for the election of new association board and president. The current president Mr. Khreisat, seems to be running unopposed so far while the eight seats for the board membership are being contested by nearly 15 members.

The election is scheduled to take place Friday at the Amman Chamber of Industry in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Information and other officials.

At the coming meeting, the association has scheduled several items of important matters for discussion, and association members intend to raise a number of issues concerning amendments to the association's regulations.

## AMRA FASHION DESIGN

For ladies invites you at its new premises at Amra Hotel (Commercial Centre, ground floor).

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### Amman Baccalaureate School

Applications are invited for the following positions from August 1991:

**JUNIOR SCHOOL**  
GRADE 3 ENGLISH CLASS TEACHER  
Applicants should be native speakers or of similar quality.

**SENIOR SCHOOL (Grades 6-12)**  
HEAD OF GEOGRAPHY  
HISTORY AND/OR GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS  
within the Social Studies Department. Teaching is throughout Senior School and courses include History and Geography to IGCSE and International Baccalaureate, and Religious Studies "O" level, taught in English.  
Applicants should be English-speakers or bilingual in English/Arabic.  
Part-time appointments will be considered.

**PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME ENGLISH LITERATURE TEACHER**  
A specialist to teach to IGCSE and the International Baccalaureate (Freshman literature level). Applicants should be native speakers or of similar quality.  
For any position, the ability to teach International Baccalaureate Theory of Knowledge (Philosophy) will be an advantage.  
This is a readvertisement. Applicants who applied to our advertisement earlier in the year need not re-apply, but will be automatically considered.  
Application forms may be obtained from the school (telephone 845572, 847191, and should be returned by March 25, 1991.



## Jordan Times

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### Vision above all

IT IS all well and good that much of Washington's political attention has been directed to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The flurry of U.S. diplomatic activity centred on the Palestinian problem is cause for guarded optimism provided it is not an open-ended undertaking the aim of which is simply to divert attention from the Iraqi situation and give little or nothing to the Palestinian side at the end of the exercise. There is room for a parallel concern to be given to the Palestinian case as well as to what can be described as the Iraqi problem. With Iraq partially occupied and its people suffering from extreme hardships and deprivation and the prospect of epidemics breaking out, there can be no excuse to continue the ongoing disregard for that country and its disastrous situation. It is a well documented fact that Iraq is also being subjected to foreign interference, especially from its eastern borders where arms, ammunition, and even men are being supplied to forces rebelling against the central government in Baghdad. If the international community has written off the Iraqi leadership it has no right to disregard so wantonly the well-being of the Iraqi people and the territorial integrity and independence of their country. No-one should want to seek solutions to one conflict in the Middle East at the price of another. The Iraqis did what they could and more to stimulate earnest interest in solving the Palestinian problem and the broader Arab-Israeli conflict. President Saddam Hussein had repeatedly linked the withdrawal of his troops from Kuwait to Israeli pullout from Arab territories, including the Golan Heights. As such, his country made the sacrifice that other Arabs should have shared but did not.

The issue now is whether enough attention should not be paid to the plight of the Iraqi people by the international community, especially by leaders of the 30-nation coalition who are mainly responsible for the devastation in Iraq. True, every effort should be made to settle the festering Palestinian problem, urgently and immediately. But these efforts will backfire if a) they are made only to divert attention from the real disasters that the war has wrought on Iraq, and b) they are designed to disappear in thin air after serving Western and Israeli purposes as necessary political manoeuvres for a certain period of time. All indications are that the Americans in particular have not learned from the mistakes of the past. Their piecemeal approach to solving Middle East problems will not work. Their mounting pressures on Iraq in essence contradict whatever serious intentions they have to tackle the Arab-Israeli conflict. And their neglect of other pressing issues, such as narrowing the gap between the region's rich and poor states and reducing the massive arsenals that make the Middle East a powderkeg, can only lead, as Crown Prince Hassan put it the other day, to further negative attitudes and invite violence as well. The Americans might well be used to tackling one problem at a time. But they might as well learn that, in this part of the world at least, it pays to have a wider vision if true solutions are sought. The time to begin is here and now.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Since August last year, the western countries have displayed their hatred of the Arab people in general and the Iraqis in particular in an unprecedented manner throughout history, said Al Rai Arabic daily Monday. Since August, the western colonial nations have maintained a policy of starving the Iraqi people in a bid to exterminate them; and despite the end of the war in the Gulf, nothing has been done to lift the sanctions, nor have the Arab and Islamic countries raised a voice of protest against this inhuman treatment of their brothers and sisters, the paper continued. Paris, London and Washington have manifested deep hatred towards the Arabs and put such hatred into practice by finding vent for the hatred in their treatment of the Iraqi people, the paper noted. The paper said that the starving of the Iraqis continues as the western nations maintain a series of lies about intentions concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict and a solution for the Palestine question. The false diplomatic moves continue towards the so-called solution of the Middle East issues at a time when the Palestinian people's rights are totally ignored in Washington, noted the paper. The United States which leads the campaign against Iraq is at the same time showing disregard to the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights by refraining from speedy action to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions in the same manner as it did with Iraq, the paper added. While we can understand the western hatred of the Arabs, said the paper, we fail to realise the total silence on the part of the Arab and Islamic nations vis-a-vis the atrocities committed against the Iraqi and Palestinian people, let alone efforts to find ways to solve their problems.

Al Dustour daily urged the United Nations sanctions committee to lift the embargo imposed on Iraq, now that all Iraqi troops moved out of Kuwait and Baghdad has abided by all Security Council resolutions. The Anglo-Saxons, who seem not to be satisfied with the destruction they caused in Iraq and the thousands of people they killed with their bombs, are not happy to see the United Nations lifting sanctions on Iraq allowing the Iraqi people a breathing space to turn their attention to reconstruction, the paper noted. The colonial powers have no right to demand that Iraq destroy its chemical weapons as a condition for lifting the sanctions which had been imposed by the United Nations Organisation, but the mere demand that Iraq must comply to their wish reflects the deep rooted hatred towards the Arabs and the colonial powers continued drive to serve Israel's goals. It is hoped that the other members of the Security Council and the world community at large will take a different position and embark on speedy moves to end the plight of the innocent women and children of Iraq who had been left under the mercy of the aggressors for so long.

### The View from Fourth Circle

## American generals, British umbrellas and Kuwaiti democrats

DESPITE the difficult ordeal it has been through, Kuwait will probably emerge from its present difficulties as far different and more impressive than it was before. In doing so, it may stimulate unprecedented nationalist forces in the Gulf that will be part of the re-shaping of the Arab World which was taking place before the crisis struck, and which will continue unabated, or perhaps even accelerated, after a brief pause while everyone lets out accumulated emotions.

Perhaps I am an inveterate naive Arab nationalist who refuses to give up the concept of an integrated and honourable Arab Nation achieving the full potential of its plentiful human and material resources, even though it may remain divided into states or statelets or provinces or any other sub-national units. I don't think so, though, because the pan-Arab ideal has been clearly expressed by the vast majority of Arab people during the past seven months of crisis and confrontation. When people finally spoke out honestly in the Arab World, revealed their real sentiments, loyalties and fears, and did not hide behind slogans, winks, nods and false hugs, the overwhelming majority wanted a Kuwait liberated by Arab dialogue, as well as freedom, honour and pan-Arabism, the small minority wanted a Kuwait liberated by American and British soldiers, as well as to be part of the Kentucky Fried Chicken Empire.

The reality of Arab nationalism is that it is a relatively modern political/emotional movement which developed in response to decades of foreign occupation and domination of the Arabs. Though Arab nationalism as a political order has never been seriously attempted this century, and rarely achieved in history, it remains a powerful personal conviction, and a national hope. Strangely enough, it may also see a rebirth in Kuwait, which will have potentially important implications for the rest of the Gulf states and whole Arab World.

Kuwait? Yes, Kuwait, because the Kuwaiti people's hard experience during the past seven months will not remain detached from the greater Arab political and social environment. Forget the emotional outbursts of Kuwaitis against other Arabs, and of other Arabs against Kuwaitis and other Gulf nationals. These are real but transient sentiments, the anger of Arab adolescents manipulated, tempted, dazzled and frightened by nearly a century of neo-colonial power politics in the region, whether stemming from London, Paris, Washington or Tel Aviv. All Arabs, in the Gulf, the Levant, the Maghreb or the Nile Valley, are exhibiting emotional excesses and nationalistic deficiencies which mark the culmination of a century of shame and failure, century which started with the British-French-imposed political order of 1915-1922, and which nears its end with the American-Israeli-British-French-maintained political order of 1990-1991.

The imperial ways of the West continue to be successful, as we have seen during the past seven months. The Arab World is split into those with western militarism and those against it. Funny new alliances and axes are concocted in region, much money changes hands, entire armies are rented out, white northern generals whisper in the ears of slightly darker and swarthier southern generals, prime ministers and secretaries of commerce gather

around like vultures, seeking sustenance from commercial contracts in order to rebuild countries they destroyed, and millions of people play musical nations in an unfeeling game that stretches from Hawaii in the west to the Philippines in the east.

The adolescent spirit of recklessness and frenzy defines an Arab region which has lost all bearings and all sense of its history and identity. Entire nations are reflagged, in a desperate, expensive, but ultimately futile attempt to buy security from the white generals of the north. The adolescent generation forgets that it was the white generals of the north who initially drew the lines in the sand which carved up the Arab people in the first place, and who originally sent us spinning into the maelstrom of regression and division which has seen us reach this pitiful stage of young recklessness today.

Kuwait, though, offers a new and important experience, whose implications will become more clear in about a year or so. We have to get through the current phase of adolescent anguish, and reach the point where the emotional groans of young people throughout the Arab World subside, and we revert to more quiet and meaningful discussions of who we are, and what we want.

Kuwait's is an important experience because for the first time in modern history, we have a generation of angry, defiant Kuwaitis — rich Gulf Arabs driven by human rage. Certainly, their anger and defiance were sparked by an occupation by another Arab state, which never should have happened or endured as long as it did. But let's leave the re-writing of history to others, and deal instead with the reality on the ground. The occupation and liberation of Kuwait are history, whose lessons we must seek to appreciate.

The people of Kuwait have compressed into seven months the national agony which the Palestinians have experienced over seven decades, and which the Lebanese have experienced over 16 years. Never mind if you support or oppose what Iraq did in occupying Kuwait, and what the cash register coalition did in return in liberating it. The facts are that the people of Kuwait were forcibly expelled from their country, their land was physically occupied, they were subjected to an attempt at obliteration of their national identity, they lived in exile or under occupation, they relied on the hospitality of other Arabs, they pleaded with the world and the United Nations to solve their problem, they demanded the implementation of relevant U.N. resolutions, much of their country's economic and cultural infrastructure was physically destroyed, and they fought a war of national resistance and liberation against a much stronger occupying force.

They were jailed, beaten, exiled, or killed. They had to hide, flee or change identity to survive. They experienced danger and fear, but they also experienced courage and a national will to live in freedom and dignity. They graduated from adolescence to adulthood, from the consciousness of a ward of the neo-colonial order to that of a free person. These are emotions that once achieved, reside forever in those corners of the mind reserved for the instruments of human will and national identity. In the people of Kuwait, or some of them, at least, we have the first

indigenous Gulf nationals to experience the agonising national reality of the Palestinians and Lebanese — we have nationalists in dishdashis, rebels in sandals, warriors who fly falcons.

The Kuwaiti experience has prompted much greater demands for democracy. Those demands strengthened because people who now will be considerably less likely to take orders from those who looked death in the face will not lightly take orders from those who sipped mint tea in five-star anguish. The inevitability of genuine democracy in Kuwait holds out the promise of an unprecedented phenomenon in the modern Arab World: rich democratic Arabs, even more importantly, perhaps, is the prospect of rich democratic Arabs who have suffered, who earned their identity and who paid a heavy price of statehood — rich, democratic, oil-producing Arabs who graduated from London's nieces to Jerusalem's uncle.

In time, as we all stop pounding our chests, hiring armies and saluting generals, rich yet democratic Arabs will ask themselves: what happened in the winter of 1990-1991? Was it necessary to destroy Iraq and Kuwait, split the Arabs so severely, and waste several hundred billion dollars in order to make America feel good about itself by killing Arabs and Muslims?

The fact is, whenever and wherever Arabs taste democracy, they will inevitably use their freedom to express pan-Arab sentiments. I would expect Kuwaitis will do the same — once the shouting is over, the anger dissipates, and the oil well fires are extinguished. Perhaps the logic of free Arabs demanding pan-Arabism is a logical reaction to many decades of autocracy, pan-Arab fragmentation, superpower subjugation and regional humiliation. We want to be free, dignified and somehow united or integrated into a larger, more productive and viable Arab entity. This has been the clear lesson of the past seven months: the newly democratising Arabs rejected the militarism of the West, while the American-led cash register coalition was transparently thin on pluralism and human rights.

Will a democratic Kuwait also seek comfort, identity and national security in pan-Arabism? Will rich Arabs question the meaning of wasting hundreds of billions of dollars of Arab money to finance the war games of those white northern generals who have been the source of our anguish for so many decades? I think they will — in time. I think democratising rich Arabs will provide an impressive spectacle of questioning the real sources of one's national security, the real aspirations of one's people, and the real meaning of one's flag. They are likely to have the vision necessary to see that security derives neither from money nor guns, but rather from building a coherent, productive and rational society which responds to the true sentiments and needs of its people.

Renting white northern generals is perhaps understandable, after seven decades of neo-colonial flash, high tea by the Arabian Sea, and sharp-tipped British umbrellas have conditioned you to do so. But when you have stared death in the face and survived to talk about it, when you have taken control of your own life for the first time ever, when you have seen your country literally ablaze, then the generals become somehow less relevant, the umbrellas more awkward, and the tea more bitter.

## Democracy for Iraqis — glitter may be missing, but still an attractive way out

By P.V. Vivekanand

IRAQI PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein's pledge to introduce political pluralism through multi-party elections and democratic reforms comes as no surprise at a time when the government is facing unprecedented trouble on the internal and external fronts.

But what remains to be seen is how it would be accepted by the Iraqi people as they are trying to adjust themselves to the aftermaths of a devastating war which have deprived them of basic amenities of life and whether the prospect of popular participation in government would induce them to bury their discontent and rally behind their present leadership.

Widely seen as a concerted effort to hold the country together against rebellions in the north and south and to take the punch out of frustration and despair over the destructive war, President Saddam's announcement Saturday that he was opening the door for democracy was somewhat expected by many in the Iraqi capital.

"Democracy and reforms in the leadership structure is one of the ways that Saddam could adopt to pacify the people," an Iraqi citizen, a photographer by profession, told this reporter last week. But, he cautioned, "a lot depends on how it is presented to the people at this juncture."

By and large, this opinion could be seen as representing the Iraqi middle class which is the most vocal critic of the government in the post-war phase. This criticism, as far as this reporter could trace, is not anti-Saddam per se, but could be attributed to the problems the people face in the aftermath of the war: Contaminated water, skyrocketing prices and lack of power and fuel, not to mention total absence of communications. These issues preoccupy the daily life of the Baghdadis, leaving little time for any serious contemplation of politics.

To a large extent, President Saddam continues to enjoy massive popularity among the Iraqi people, for whom the

44-year-old revolutionary from Tikrit who ran the country for the last 23 years is still someone held in respect, even reverence, as the ultimate in leadership and pan-Arab nationalism.

One of the main reasons for this phenomenon could perhaps be seen in the contributions that President Saddam has made to his country in terms of tangible progress and development. Iraq's infrastructure — or whatever is left of it after 40 continuous days and nights of intense bombardment by the American-led coalition seeking to reverse Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait — shows every indication of resources well spent. Many Iraqis are pained by simple reminders of how the country's public services were revamped and upgraded in the past few years despite the Iran-Iraq war. Sure enough such a sentiment is indeed a recipe for frustration over the regime, but they also remember that it is President Saddam who should be credited for the improvement. By extension, many believe that President Saddam himself is the right man to do the job and put things right again.

"Who can really push the process with determination and ensure that the job is done properly?" asked Fatima, a saleswoman at a cloth-store in Baghdad. "None of those at the top now have those qualities," she asserted. "War has been imposed on us, and we are paying a terrible price. But to clamour for toppling the regime will be adding insult to injury since our suffering will only be prolonged and aggravated with no guarantees that the problems will be addressed."

Unlike Fatima, many Iraqis bitterly complain of the country going to war over Kuwait. They feel that the leadership should have pulled a last-minute stunt and averted war by quitting Kuwait or announcing the intention to do so before the Jan. 15 deadline set by the U.N. Security Council and saved the country the massive devastation and destruction that began 17 hours later.

But the Iraqis are proud

people, and most of them would never concede to an outsider that they could have gone wrong, particularly that the dominant feeling is that Iraq would have been slowly and steadily strangled to death economically whether or not it invaded Kuwait or whether or not it agreed to relinquish the emirate.

At the same time, the average middle class Iraqi is fully aware that any externally-imposed alternative to the leadership of Saddam Hussein would only mean further massive bloodshed if only because of the very inter-dependent nature of every element of the regime in power in Baghdad.

"If Saddam goes, then down goes with him everyone else associated with the regime," said a long-time Asian resident of Baghdad. "Everyone will fight for their survival and the outcome will be nothing but the bloodiest in Iraqi history."

President Saddam's promise of enhanced popular participation in decision-making through a new constitution, parliament and government is not new. He had promised his people in late 1989 and early 1990 that the country would have all these and an elected president by September 1990. The pledge was widely welcomed by most Iraqis and had enhanced President Saddam's standing among his people.

"There is little doubt that Saddam meant every word he said when he promised full democracy to his people," asserted an elderly Egyptian who has lived most of his life in Iraq. "There was no compelling reason at that time for him to make such a promise and all indications are that he hoped to live by it."

The Gulf crisis changed all that and the promise remained unfulfilled. But while dusting off the same pledge under the changed circumstances, said an Iraqi businessman, the regime could not be afford to perceive an offering democracy instead of bread and water to its people.

"In my opinion, most people would be more than glad to accept the offer as a way out of the crisis brought in by the war

and compounded by the rebellion," said the businessman, who, like many Iraqis, asked not to be identified while commenting on the political situation in the country.

"But steady progress in alleviating the suffering of the people has to be shown parallel to moves towards reforms," the businessman cautioned. "As long as that delicate equilibrium is maintained, all possibilities are in favour of the regime."

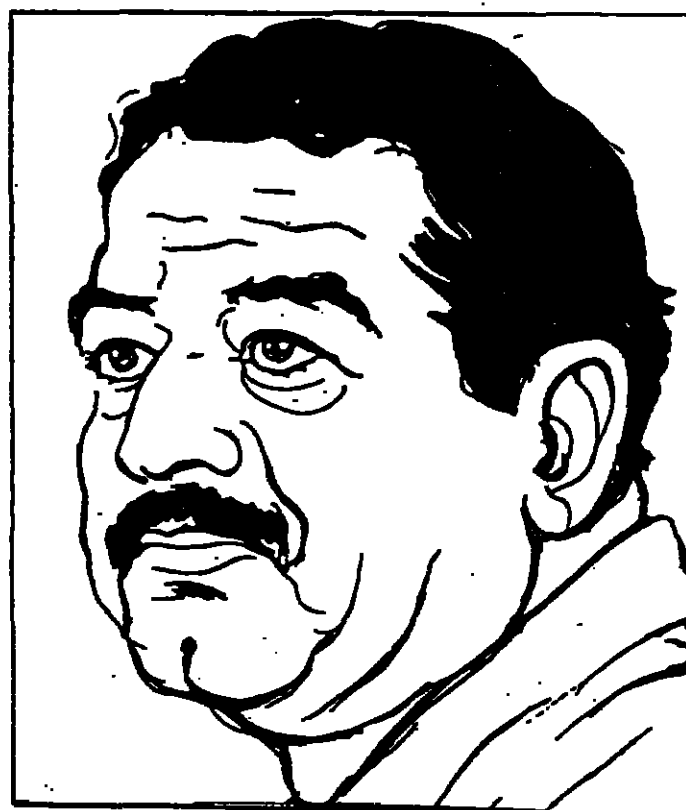
"We Iraqis are simple people and we want to avoid complex situations as far as we can do that," he said. "It is a safe bet that if presented to the people in careful measure and properly administered, reforms could go a long way in ensuring popular support for the regime. The people might even be willing to overlook that the 40 days of war over Kuwait have caused losses a hundred times more than the eight years of war with Iran."

"It is a very delicate process and it will be further complicated by the presence of the allied forces in the country and by the demands that they would make on the regime to serve whatever their interests are," the businessman conceded. "But if the U.S. is seeking stability in the region, they had better not pressure the government on anything at this point in time."

Most residents of Baghdad also appear to be convinced that the Shiite rebellion in the south and the Kurdish revolt in the north will not last long. "It will not be in our interest at all to support the unrest," said a taxi driver. "The army has the power to quash it. It is only a matter of time."

However, there cannot be any denial of the fact that anti-government sentiments are being increasingly voiced by the people in Baghdad, but it is far from reaching a level where the ouster of the government is the key demand.

Against the backdrop of the crippling blows that the war has dealt to the country and its people, the government has definitely realised that its priorities should be to address the daily problems of the



population. Such awareness is self-evident in the utmost concern and focus that the authorities have given to efforts to repair the damages and restore power, potable water and food supplies to the people. Iraqi newspapers are giving priority to covering the rebuilding efforts and urging the people to cooperate with the authorities with promises that things will get back to normal soon.

But the main question remains unanswered: In sectors where the damage is almost one hundred per cent, how can the government hope to address the problem, particularly that its coffers are almost empty of foreign exchange, its assets abroad are frozen and a sweeping international trade sanction is still in place against it?

Concerted moves are underway in Baghdad to get the U.N. Security Council to lift the embargo on Iraq. And most observers expect the government to agree to all conditions set by the allies as long as the light at the end of the tunnel is an abrogation of the crippling sanctions.

There is little chance of the leadership managing to make any significant breakthrough in their efforts to help the people cope with the emergency situation and meet their basic needs as long as the embargo remains in place," noted a political observer in Baghdad. "And as long as the people's problems are not addressed, discontent would continue to foment and this would add further political complications."

The very fact that a violent upheaval in the corridors of power in Baghdad would trigger a chain reaction which will run the length and breadth of the Iraqi society is a deterrent to most middle class Iraqis. And, if changes could come through a peaceful process, all indications are that Iraqis would more than gladly welcome it and put the war behind them.

The writer is on the staff of the Jordan Times. He recently returned from a five-day working visit to Iraq.



# Rebellion

(Continued from page 1)

had been killed and that rebels had tortured others.

Reports from Amara, near the Iranian border, reported similar damage as well as destruction at government offices and the local headquarters of the ruling Baath Party.

An unnamed party official from the city told one newspaper the rioters were "intruders" and not Iraqis.

President Saddam Hussein Saturday accused Iran of backing the uprising, which he said had been crushed in the south. He also vowed to stop the Kurdish rebellion in the north.

Al Qadisiya accused the United States of fomenting the unrest. It linked the unrest to the six-week Gulf war. "The barbarism and brutality of the U.S. aggression against Iraq was not isolated from all the crimes that took place after the ceasefire at the hands of mobs, agents and outlaws," it said.

Senior Iraqi officials continue to visit the troubled regions, rallying support for the government.

On Sunday, Baghdad Radio said Izzat Ibrahim, deputy chairman of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), visited the northern province of Tammim, inhabited mainly by Kurds.

The radio added a new title for Mr. Ibrahim, calling him deputy commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

Baghdad dailies made no mention of Mr. Ibrahim's new post, vacant since the accidental death in May 1989 of Iraq's then Defence Minister Adnan Khairallah.

President Saddam, who heads the RCC, is the armed forces chief.

The newspapers also published a notice from the Defence Ministry calling on all cadets of military colleges to resume their studies on Wednesday. All schools and colleges have been closed since Jan. 17 when the Gulf war began.

Baghdad Television on Monday continued broadcasting interviews with various people on the unrest. An 80-year-old Shiite clergyman wept as he recounted the tragic events in Najaf last week.

Mohammad Sultan Mustafa Kalanter, dean of Najaf religious university, said he did not himself see what was happening but had been told of "killings, destruction and looting."

The clergyman said bodies were left on the streets for four days because no one dared bury them.

The television for the first time interviewed a man identified as having taken part in the riots in the southern city of Basra.

Ali Hussein Bataour, 31, an army deserter, said he was one of a group of five who took orders from an unnamed "sayid," the title usually given to Shiite clergy-men.

He said the group attacked the headquarters of the ruling Baath Party, police stations and many other government buildings. Bataour said his group killed several party members and army officers and attacked the city's prison, freeing all detainees. Some prisoners agreed to join the rioters while others fled, he added.

Bataour said rioters brought weapons from across the border — an apparent reference to the nearby Iranian border.

An Iranian dissident group said Monday its forces killed 100 Revolutionary Guards in battles near one of its bases 60 kilometres inside Iraq during the past 48 hours.

The Mujahadeen-e-Khalq said the Iranians had taken advantage of the turmoil in Iraq to attack its National Liberation Army (NLA) base outside Kifri, 160 kilometres northeast of Baghdad, with mortars and multiple rocket launchers.

Iran has denied any role in the unrest.

The Mujahadeen, which first reported an Iranian attack on its forces nine days ago, said it suffered no casualties in the latest clashes but one of its men was killed while transporting supplies.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa, dubbing the Iraqi unrest an "intifada," said Monday Iraq should be kept territorially whole.

"Before the solution to the Gulf war, Syria, Turkey and Iran agreed on the territorial integrity of Iraq and this is still valid," Mr. Sharaa said on arriving in Turkey for a two-day visit.

"The people's uprising, which we can call an intifada, is not affected by foreign forces," the semi-official Anatolian news agency quoted him as saying at the airport.

# Amnesty

(Continued from page 1)

The seven men, aged between 25 and 35 years, were speaking at the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad after arriving in the Iraqi capital from Safwan, near the

Kuwaiti border.

Unshaven and looking exhausted, they said they had been "thrown out" by Kuwait last Sunday and had to walk to Baghdad in the absence of any means of transport.

"We were arrested for no real reason, other than being Jordanians, beaten up and tortured at a school in the Jahra district (near the border) with 148 other prisoners among them Palestinians, Iraqis and Sudanese," one deportee said.

The seven said Kuwaitis were arresting Jordanians, Palestinians, Iraqis and Yemenis after searching their homes and checking their identity cards.

The seven deportees, who declined to give their names, said many Jordanians and Palestinians lived in Farwaniya and Hawali districts and most of the detainees came from there.

"They (the Kuwaitis) put us in a room three by three metres and tied our hands behind our backs. They then beat and kicked us while pouring insults," one said.

"I saw four Palestinians shot dead, while a friend of mine whose cousin died at home was prevented from removing the body for burial for six days," another added.

The detainees said that while they were in prison Kuwaiti and other women whose nationalities were not known came to identify them, saying they were looking for men who raped them.

The Jordanians said the Kuwaitis took their cars and belongings and left them at the border with only the clothes they stood up in.

"They threw us out without passports and money, claiming we have collaborated with the Iraqi army and killed some Kuwaitis. But there has been no evidence against us," one deportee said.

"I lived in Kuwait for 29 years and I am married to a Kuwaiti and have children," another said. "They have kept my family in Kuwait saying that my wife and children are not allowed to join me."

One said Kuwaiti officials, including Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, had said Palestinians and Jordanians should not be harmed but nobody had heeded this.

Sheikh Saad has denied reports of Palestinians being detained and tortured.

# League

(Continued from page 1)

The session was expected to discuss cooperation among Arab countries in the post-war era and the prospect of a formula to achieve security and cooperation in the Arab region and also ways to bring about Arab reconciliation.

# Arafat

(Continued from page 1)

settled, saying: "Who would guarantee that Israel would afterwards accept negotiating with me?"

Asked if negotiations could start without a prior commitment from Israel to the notion of an independent Palestinian state, Mr. Arafat responded: "The only thing that I have asked for is that international law — that is, the resolutions of the Security Council — constitute the platform for discussions."

"I don't ask that the Israelis accept the idea of a state to start to talk to them. I only ask that the basis of discussions be the U.N. resolutions."

Everyone has the right to bring his own ideas to the talks, with the Security Council as arbiter, Le Figaro quoted Mr. Arafat as saying.

Le Figaro said the interview was conducted early Sunday in a villa in Tunis, where the PLO is headquartered.

Mr. Arafat indicated that any negotiations would be chosen by the PLO.

Le Figaro asked if he would accept Palestinians chosen from inside the occupied territories.

"No. Our people has its leadership outside. We cannot accept that the Israelis put this type of conditions on the dialogue, because we set none."

Israel refuses any direct talks with the PLO.

# Palestinian exodus from Kuwait in the making

By Kathy Evans

A MIDDLE-aged woman was pleading with the young sheikh. Her daughter stood silently beside her, face aglow with humiliation. "Forty-two years in Kuwait, 42 years," she screamed, tears streaming down her cheeks, "and now you treat us like enemies."

The woman, a Palestinian, refused to give her name but said she was a headmistress and former tutor to the young sheikh's mother, in whose name she now begged for help.

The day before, her husband, who has a back ailment, had his car taken away from him at a Kuwaiti army road block. He was turfed out on the street and told to walk home. Now she wanted to phone her daughter in Jordan and the people managing the international line told her to go away, they don't put calls through to Jordan.

She held up the black cloak

she was wearing, the abaya.

"You know I have to go in disguise now. I wear this wretched thing to look like a Kuwaiti. You think I wear this normally?" She asked. The young sheikh scribbled his telephone number on a piece of paper to call in case of trouble at another roadblock. The woman went off, a precious piece of influence secured.

The headmistress was lucky, she had access to an Al Sabah; but for the rest of the 200,000 Palestinians still in the emirate life is a daily exercise in avoiding arrest or harassment from vengeful Kuwaitis. Another refuge for Palestinians, the home to an entire generation, is disappearing.

Kuwaitis say that many Palestinians co-operated with the Iraqi authorities during the occupation and that Kuwaitis were killed by Palestinians. Palestinians say that only handful collaborated and that

the rest of the community is paying the price for PLO policy, which they had no hand in.

Government officials talk of the need to "clean out" the Palestinian suburbs. The cleaning out process can be heard every night in the sound of gunfire from the Palestinian neighbourhoods. No information is offered on who is shooting at whom.

The continuing arrests have sent a wave of fear through the remainder of Kuwait's predominantly middle class Palestinian community. Aiman, a young computer operator just out of Pitman's school, has not left his house in Hawali, the city's largest Palestinian suburb, since the liberation, not even to visit the mosque 200 yards away.

"You can't look a Kuwaiti in the eye now. We love Kuwait but it doesn't love us," he says. Aiman was born in Kuwait 21 years ago and has only been to his ancestral village in the

Israeli-occupied West Bank once, seven years ago. Now his mother won't let him out: too many people are disappearing, she says.

In the bread queue in Hawali it seems virtually everyone knows someone who has disappeared, taken from their homes or gone for bread or petrol and never returned. Hamza, who was waiting to register for food, told me his brother was taken in the middle of the night on March.

"He was an English teacher like me. Thirty-nine years old, a teacher," he said. In the Arab World a teacher is a much respected figure. Hamza has no idea why his brother, Azmi, was arrested. "Two men came in plain clothes and kidnapped him. He wasn't collaborator. All he did in the occupation was sell stuff door to door, just to make enough money to live." Azmi was selling the household items of Palestinians who sold up and

fled from the Iraqi army.

At home over tiny cups of tea, Hamza's wife, Rada, says she is just waiting for the borders to open. She glances over to where Hamza is kneeling in prayer and says: "We all have to go. That's what they want. I don't feel the same as before now with Kuwaitis." Rada was born in Kuwait, has worked 16 years as a typist at the University, and will leave her father's grave behind when she departs.

There are countless other tales of disappearances. Another woman barged her way through the crowd to tell me her son went with four other Palestinians to get petrol and had not returned 10 days later. She scurried off quickly when I asked her name.

Ali Abdul Azziz says he went with his young neighbour 10 days ago to try and find some food. "He was pulled out of the car and searched and

they found an address of someone in Baghdad written on a piece of paper. It was the address of a friend of a friend who was going to help them, we tried to tell them that, but they took him anyway" Ali explained.

Most of the Palestinians in the queue were planning to leave when the borders opened and the banks released their savings. Many appeared convinced that as soon as the government opened their offices all except needed technicians would get the sack. Another exodus, so much a symptom of the Gulf war, appears about to start.

Shouts go up at the front of the queue as the window issuing permits for food closes for the day. "They're feeding us last" said one girl bitterly. "We go to get bread or gas, and they say go and ask your Saddam to give you food" — The Guardian.

# Ordinary people on opposite sides

BBC World Service's Martin Plant has just returned from South Africa after making a special series of radio programmes *The Peoples Of South Africa* in which he reports on the views of ordinary South Africans, the extraordinary events of the last eighteen months and the prospects ahead.

THEY come down the main street of East London in a wave — dancing, shouting, singing. The white residents of this sleepy little port on South Africa's east coast stand on the pavements, or hang out of windows, a little bemused as 8,000 demonstrators take over the centre of their town.

At the front of the march the clergy are attempting to look dignified as the crowd surges around threatening to envelop them in their enthusiasm, despite the best efforts of the marshals. Next to them walk the leaders of the African National Congress and their rivals, the Pan Africanist Congress, for once burying their differences. The march is part of the protest movement to demand the formation of a constituent assembly whose role would be to draft a new constitution for South Africa.

As the demonstration sweeps past the pretentious Victorian town hall, Patriot Dyani is just a face in the crowd. "Umkhonto we Sizwe is a tiger," he sings, along with the rest of the march, praising the achievements of the military wing of the ANC.

He is a militant, dedicated member of the ANC, the sort of activist who has brought the South African government to the negotiating table. It is his face, and the faces of thousands like him, that have appeared on our television sets whenever South Africa is in the news.

But there is a very different side to Patriot. There is the cautious advice worker, who spends his days ploughing through the

tangled web of apartheid legislation on behalf of his clients. People come from miles around to the cramped offices where he works, queuing from four in the morning, in the hope of getting help with the pensions they have not received or the jobs from which they have been dismissed.

Patriot is also a deacon in his church, preaching the sermon when his priest cannot be at the service. And he is the husband of Beauty, who came from town to live with him in his cramped two-roomed house at the end of a dusty track, forty kilometres from East London, without electricity, sanitation or running water.

Patriot aches for change — for a new South Africa in which he and Beauty will have a vote; in which he no longer fears the policeman's knock; in which there will be new classrooms for his daughter's school.

It was fascinating to interview Patriot for the BBC World Service series and then to talk to Frans Malan, an Afrikaner who is not so sure of the future. Yes, he is pleased that the government has turned its back on apartheid, but he is not prepared to write off the last forty years as a ghastly mistake.

"I am not certain that everything that came out of it was bad," he says. "The point of departure was very pure — we must have separate amenities, but equal." It did not turn out that way, he concedes.

Frans is a wine farmer — one of South Africa's best. He is inordinately proud of his farm "Somonsig," with its vineyards



Martin Plant (right) interviews Patriot Dyani for BBC World Service's programme *The Peoples Of South Africa* (Photo by Stan/Goodenough)

nestling beneath the blue mountains that surround Stellenbosch, just half an hour's drive north of Cape Town.

Frans is a pillar of the Afrikaners community. He sits on President de Klerk's economic advisory council. Cabinet ministers are family friends. Yet anyone looking for a stereotype, for a racist dedicated to the oppression of the black majority, will be disappointed by the Malans.

"The coloured people are our neighbours," Frans argues. He has a well-equipped creche for his labourers' children, and Mrs. Malan runs classes in everything from knitting to hygiene. Frans has no difficulty in considering the possibility of living under a black head of state, "as long as he is properly qualified," he adds.

It is hard to see Frans and Patriot as enemies, yet this is just what they have been. Both are warm, generous men. Both are devout Christians. Both are idealists. And both have been on opposite sides in what has been bitter civil strife. From the strikes

# Corniche rendezvous for Beirut's peaceful Sundays

By Haitham Haddadin  
Reuters

BEIRUT — The palm trees are shredded by shrapnel and the pavement pocked by shells but Beirut's Corniche Al Manara is a favourite spot for joggers, beggars, lovebirds, soldiers and fortune tellers — especially on Sundays.

The tree-lined four-kilometres stretch along the Mediterranean is a rendezvous for a wide mix of Beirut residents.

"During the (civil) war and even now the corniche has been the only outlet for many people," says Beirut accountant Nadim Itani.

"This is the biggest popular coffee house in the world," noted Aboud Atriyeh, author of "Tales from Corniche Al Manara," which he collected on daily visits to the popular Riviera.

The pilgrimage starts at noon on Sundays Beirut's weekly holiday. Bumper to bumper, bullet-scarred hulks and waxed sports cars become stuck in bottlenecks along the winding avenue.

Almost everyone seems to want to join the pavement party as they make for plastic chairs and tables, which face red, blue, orange or white kiosks with names like *Lovers' Rendezvous* and *Agony*.

Refreshments from coffee to whisky cost a fraction of the price elsewhere. As the corniche is in Muslim western Beirut alcoholic drinks are covered with issues in token respect to Islam's ban on such drinks.

Women in black head-to-toe chadours, skirts or denim walk side by side. Young men wear Sunday best suits or Arab gowns with checkered keffiyehs (heads-carves).

Carts selling cheap goods fill the pavement. A hunch-backed old lady, offering cigarettes, candy floss and Lebanese flags, struggles to push her fragile handcart against the human flood.

Men while away the hours with backgammon and cards while women chat, trying to make themselves heard over the cacophony of music and car horns. Men and women relax over water pipes or bubbly-bubbles.

The corniche has reminders of worse days in Beirut. One is the wrecked U.S. embassy, hit by a suicide bomber in 1983. The building's sixth floor dangles down to the ground.

There are also the ghostly ruins of the once-bustling hotel area, including the desolate high-rise Holiday Inn. Further on are the wrecked nightclubs of Beirut's former red-light district of Zaytouneh.

Visible across the bay is what was known as the "other Beirut" — the Christian eastern sector divided from the Muslim west by the green line battleground which ends the corniche.

But since the Lebanese army reunited the capital last December, Christians from east Beirut now often join the throng. Some strollers and salesmen on the corniche come from further afield.

"I left Damascus because it is safe here now," says Jamal Al Saqqa, a 30-year-old Syrian selling cheap replicas of the Mona Lisa and Holy Kaaba of Mecca in the shade of a palm tree.

After dark, the corniche is busy with groups of well-dressed partygoers dedicated to fun until the early hours. Vendors brew their hangover cure: a strong dose of Turkish coffee.

Weapons are all too common, as elsewhere in a city which has been at war with itself for nearly 16 years. Lebanese and Syrian soldiers, armed with AK-47 assault rifles, patrol the streets. Van owners, charging 500 Lebanese pounds (50 cents) for a beer and \$750 (75 cents) for a coffee, fare better than many in Lebanon, where the minimum wage is \$40 per month.

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# Milan's reign seems likely to end in Marseille

LONDON (R) — AC Milan's two-year reign as Europe's top soccer club seems likely to end in Marseille in a European Cup quarter-final second leg Wednesday.

Marseille, aiming to become the first French side to win the competition, held Milan to a 1-1 draw in the first leg two weeks ago and the Italian side currently appear especially vulnerable.

A 1-0 home defeat against Atlanta Sunday, their second successive league reverse, left them five points adrift of leaders Sampdoria and effectively out of the title race.

Milan have a tremendous record in recent seasons, winning the Italian League in 1988 and subsequently taking both the European Cup and World Cup Championships in 1989 and 1990.

But their Dutch midfielder Ruud Gullit recently admitted such success could not be maintained indefinitely.

"Big teams stay at the top for three, four years, then they slip below the top level, look for players and slowly, slowly go back to the top," he said.

Milan will not be helped by the absence of ace Dutch marksman

Marco Van Basten who is completing a suspension.

Marseille's own star striker Jean-Pierre Papin, who scored in Milan, has recovered from influenza after missing Friday's 1-1 league draw at Saint Etienne.

The result left Marseille five points clear at the top of the French first division.

Philippe Veretout is expected to replace injured midfielder Bernard Pardo Wednesday.

Portuguese champions Porto limbered up for the home leg of their quarter-final with Germans Bayern Munich by beating Stuttgart 4-1 in the league Saturday.

Striker Domingos Oliveira, who grabbed Porto's goal in their 1-1 first leg draw in Munich, scored a hat-trick.

Porto are second in the league behind Benfica, beaten 1990 European Cup finalists.

Bayern appear to have corrected a mid-season stutter, returning to the top of the Bundesliga after a 3-0 victory over Karlsruhe.

Striker Roland Wohlfarth is the man Porto need to subdue. He is the Bundesliga's leading scorer with 15 goals this season.

Bayern will however miss their

captain Klaus Augenthaler, suspended after being sent off in the first leg.

Spanish champions Real Madrid go into their home leg with Spartak Moscow needing a win to rescue a disastrous season.

They have no chance of retaining their title and on Saturday slumped to their third successive league defeat when they lost to Logrones.

Real clearly had one eye on Wednesday's tie, resting strikers Hugo Sanchez and Emilio Butragueno, midfielder Rafael Gordillo, defender Miguel Tendillo and goalkeeper Pedro Jaro.

## European soccer

Jaro was Real's hero when they came away from Moscow with a 0-0 draw two weeks ago.

While three quarter-finals are finely poised, the fourth looks more clear-cut with Dynamo Dresden unlikely to overturn a 3-0 deficit against a talented Red Star Belgrade side.

In the Cup Winners' Cup, Montpellier will be aiming to show compatriots Marseille how things should be done when they play Manchester United Tuesday.

Montpellier, like Marseille, must be favourites to advance to the last four after gaining a 1-1 draw in their away leg.

The ambitious little club surprised many in the first two rounds by dismissing Dutch team PSV Eindhoven and Steaua Bucharest of Romania, 1988 and 1986 European Cup winners respectively, to reach the quarter-finals.

They did it in style too, not conceding a single goal in the four games and thrashing the stunned Romanians 8-0 on aggregate.

Montpellier increased their growing reputation as giant-killers when they held United, the 1968 European champions, to a 1-1 draw in the first leg in England, making themselves odds-on favourites to go through to the semifinals.

The score at Old Trafford has taken us 60 per cent of the way," Montpellier trainer Henry Kasparow said.

But the last English side left in Europe, in the season marking the return of English clubs after a five-year compulsory absence following the Heysel disaster, take

a different view.

Manager Alex Ferguson, who for once has no injury worries, said: "If I can field my strongest side, it gives us every chance."

"The incentives for us are fantastic with the European semifinals waiting. It's not easy, they hold the advantage having scored an away goal."

Compared with the rich traditions of Manchester United, Montpellier are upstarts. The club was founded only 17 years ago by refuse disposal firm boss Louis Nicollin, a larger-than-life figure who still runs the team with a paternal air coupled with deep passion and commitment.

Montpellier, whose La Mosson Stadium holds only 18,000, needed just seven years to reach the French first division and took their first trophy last year when they won the French Cup.

Nicollin's team is attractive with authentic stars in young goal-scoring sweeper Laurent Blanc, a fixture in the French national team, Colombian midfielder Carlos Valderrama and Polish winger Jacek Ziobor.

As against Eindhoven, Valderrama was left out of the side in Manchester when defence was

the order of the day but his subtle orchestration is likely to be in evidence when Montpellier go on the attack.

But they will be without promising full-back Pascal Bailly, sent off in the first leg for a revenge foul on Mark Hughes, midfielder Vincent Guerin, also suspended, and injured defender Michel Der Zakarian.

United are boosted by the return from injury of defenders Steve Bruce and Dennis Irwin after successful comebacks in the 1-1 draw with Nottingham Forest Saturday, their seventh league match in a row without a win.

Former England captain Bryan Robson is likely to be a key player acting as an advanced sweeper in front of the back four and the goal threat will come from Hughes, Scottish striker Brian McClair and young winger Lee Sharpe.

Sampdoria will be hoping they can continue their fine league form in their return Cup Winners' Cup tie with Legia Warsaw.

The holders surprisingly lost 1-0 in Warsaw but will be boosted by Sunday's win at Pisa which put them a point clear of Internazionale at the top of the table.

# U.S. women top world figure skating competition

MUNICH (AP) — In the mid 1950s, Americans Hayes Jenkins, Ronnie Robertson and Jenkins brother David dominated men's figure skating.

They went one-two-three in the 1955 and 1956 and did the same at the 1965 winter Olympics in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, the only Olympic sweep in figure skating.

Now may be the time for the American women to show the way.

Kristi Yamaguchi, Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan swept the women's event, the first time a country so dominated the women's world competition.

And there is strength at home.

Jill Trenary, the 1990 champion, couldn't recover in time from ankle surgery and had to bypass the competition.

She intends to return next year, coached by Carol Heiss Jenkins, the 1960 gold medalist who is married to Hayes Jenkins.

With two winter Olympics happening over the next three years, things appear medal-laden for the U.S. women.

"It very definitely reflects the strength of U.S. skating," said Christi Ness, Yamaguchi's coach. "The U.S. competition makes them work hard. We left a lot of

good ones home. We have very good juniors."

With the depth of American women, it will be a tough competition to make the American team. Three spots are available on the Olympics team for women's singles.

But, after Albertville's Olympics next year, there is only a two-year wait before the 1994 winter games in Lillehammer, Norway, because of the rescheduling of the Olympic schedule.

Up-and-coming stars such as Nicole Bobek and Lisa Ervin will not have to wait four years for another shot at the Olympics if people like Yamaguchi, Harding and Kerrigan are still around.

"The fifth or sixth U.S. woman could have won the Europeans this year," John Nicks, an American coach, said.

European champion Surya Bonaly of France, a terrific jumper, was fifth in the World Championships although light years behind the U.S. trio in grace and style.

The question remains about Midori Ito of Japan.

A series of mishaps and misfortunes not only happened to her in this competition but also during the year.

# Lazio says Gascoigne will play for them next year

ROME (R) — Lazio are convinced England midfielder Paul Gascoigne will join them from Tottenham in a world record transfer despite denials by the London club.

"Gascoigne will play for Lazio next season," the Rome club's President Gian Marco Calleri said.

Lazio are reported to have offered \$15.5 million.

"We have the release contract for Paul Gascoigne in hand. I'm not interested in anything they're saying in London," Calleri added.

"The chances that the Englishman will play for Lazio are 100 per cent."

Meanwhile in London, Tottenham's bankers reportedly gave a consortium headed by Manager Terry Venables a deadline of 1700 GMT Monday to prove its takeover bid was in place.

The consortium has vowed not to let Gascoigne despite the club having liabilities estimated at £20 million (\$37 million).

"Our offer is for the club as it stands and that would not include selling Gascoigne," Venables said Saturday.

# Arsenal captain returns to England squad

LONDON (R) — Arsenal captain Tony Adams, released from prison only last month, was named Monday in the England soccer squad for next week's European Championship Group 7 game with Ireland at Wembley.

Central defender Adams spent eight weeks in jail for drink and reckless driving offences but has proved his fitness and form in four games for Arsenal since his release.

"Adams is a straightforward selection... having returned successfully to the Arsenal side he has been picked purely on merit," England manager Graham Taylor said.

The 24-year-old Adams has made 18 international appearances and returned to the England side after a two-year absence for the qualifier with Ireland in Dublin last November. The game ended in a 1-1 draw.

Taylor's midfield options have been severely limited by injuries to a host of players including Paul Gascoigne of Tottenham and Liverpool's Steve McMahon.

Crystal Palace midfielder Geoff Thomas is named in the squad for the first time while veteran Gordon Cowans, a surprise selection for the game in Dublin, is also in the 22-man group.

Ireland and England both have three points from two qualifying games but Ireland top the group on goal difference.

# Becker, Agassi squeak by, Seles and Graf cruise at Florida championships

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (R) — A rusty Boris Becker and an erratic Andre Agassi survived second round scares, while the top women's seeds, Steffi Graf and Monica Seles, breezed through third round matches at the International Players Tennis Championships.

Becker, seeded second, needed a third set tiebreak to get past American qualifier Steve DeVries 5-7, 6-3, 7-6.

Third seed Agassi, defending men's champion at the 10-day, \$2.55-million event, advanced to the third round after winning a see-saw battle with talented young Frenchman Fabrice Santoro 7-6, 4-6, 7-5.

Sixth-ranked U.S. Open champion Pete Sampras was not as lucky. The often-injured 19-year-old American fell to 132nd-ranked Frenchman Rodolphe Gilbert 6-4, 6-2.

"It was one of the worst matches I've ever played," the fifth seed lamented.

Ninth-seeded American Brad Gilbert was an earlier upset victim, falling to Dutch qualifier Jan Siemerink 6-7, 6-4, 6-3.

The top-seeded women were untested Sunday.

Second-seeded defending champion Monica Seles of Yugoslavia, newly crowned number one player in the world, crushed Luxembourg's Karin Kschwendt 6-0, 6-1.

The 79th-ranked Kschwendt never held serve and only got on the scoreboard by breaking Seles in the opening game of the first set.

"I really wanted to finish the match as soon as possible," said Seles.

Top seed Graf, whose record run at number one came to a halt last week, easily dispatched American Gretchen Magers 6-3, 6-0 to take her place in the fourth round.

Earlier third seed Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina, fourth-seeded American Mary Joe Fernandez and her fifth-seeded compatriot Zina Garrison posted straight set third round wins.

Becker, who hasn't played since suffering a thigh muscle pull, in the semifinals at Brussels last month, appeared tentative throughout much of his match.

"It looked like I was almost finished again today," said Becker, who has never advanced past the third round here.

The German was unprepared for the serious challenge mounted by the 270th-ranked Devries, who broke Becker in the 11th game to take the first set.

Becker appeared to regain his form in the second set, but got sloppy again in the decider.

Devries was up 5-2 and served for the match at 5-4, but Becker lifted his game to break back and force the tiebreak.

The former Wimbledon and U.S. Open Champion quickly fell behind 1-4 in the tiebreak, but captured six of the last seven points to survive.

The fourth-ranked Agassi fell behind in all three sets, but managed to hold off the less experienced 53-ranked Santoro by rallying in the first and third.

"It turned out to be a lot better match than I wanted it to be," Agassi said. "I was pretty fortunate to win the first set and the third set was a little bit a matter of experience at the end."

# S. African athletics boards take major unity step

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African athletics officials, their sights set on next year's Olympics, said Monday they had helped clear the way to Spain by merging two of the sport's three rival controlling bodies.

But the one remaining dissenting body, an anti-apartheid grouping which mainly represents schools athletics, dampened rising hopes that the sport would have its house in order in time for Barcelona.

South African Amateur Athletics Union (SAAAU) President Joe Stutsen said it had agreed to form a unity committee with the South African Amateur Athletics Congress (SAAAC), together representing about 97 per cent of the sport's interests.

"This is a gigantic step, a dream come true. Nothing can stop us now," Stutsen said.

He said an invitation would be extended to the anti-apartheid South African Athletics Board (SAAAB) to join the interim committee which would have the task of bringing the sport back into world competition.

But SAAAB President Harry Hendrickse said the other two bodies were still ignoring the glaring inequalities between black and white sports facilities in their haste to qualify a team for the Olympics.

"The bottom line seems to be international competition as soon as possible. They have forgotten about the basic issues. The strategy is not satisfactory," he said.

He said the SAAAB would study the invitation to attend a meeting of the new interim committee on April 7 and make a decision later this week.

The formation of a unified body within each sport is the main pre-condition of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) before the anti-apartheid ban on sporting links is lifted.

In the wake of President F.W. de Klerk's pledge to scrap apartheid laws by the middle of this year, most sports bodies have made giant leaps towards forming single, non-racial ruling bodies.

A senior IOC delegation arrives in South Africa Friday to see for itself the measures which have been taken to banish racism from sport.

Most officials, including anti-apartheid veteran Sam Ramsamy, are confident that the high-powered delegation will conclude that the country is on the right track.

Ramsamy, whose South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC) championed the country's sporting isolation for two decades, has been selected to lead the way back from the sporting shadows.

Despite the internal wrangling, Ramsamy is confident that South Africa will have team at Barcelona, where track athlete Zola Budd Pieterse and marathon runner Frith Van Der Merwe would be expected to lead the medal chase.

## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



## Mutt'n'Jeff



# HOROSCOPE NOT RECEIVED



### JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KAWTE  
TINFE  
UNEEVA  
INBOUN

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: BLAZE ANNOY FESTAL DETACH  
Answer: A good boxer performs a "feat" with these — HIS HANDS AND FEET

### THE Daily Crossword

by C.F. Murray

ACROSS  
1 "Me Kate"  
5 Decades  
10 Ratted  
14 Villa d—  
16 Cherish  
18 At all  
19 Privileged  
20 Vincent Lopez theme  
22 Liberate  
23 Little by little  
24 Try  
25 Move  
26 Author de Beauvoir  
29 Fine  
33 Taran  
34 Lawn  
35 Actor Howard Sweet  
37 Blind parts  
38 Chimney buildup  
39 SOB  
40 Numbers game  
41 Rib  
42 Green alga  
44 Waite matura  
45 Loaded  
46 Old salts  
47 Sealed item  
50 Rose Bowl  
54 Landed  
56 In — (easily)  
57 Alg. port  
58 Muse number  
59 Fr. composer  
60 Lush  
61 Gadebott  
62 Actor Williams  
63 Night light

DOWN  
1 Barrels  
2 Capri e.g.  
3 Editor's word  
4 Takes charge  
5 Disaimined  
6 parking  
7 Wiesel  
8 Tedious routine  
9 Feel a blow's effect  
10 Sp. lady  
11 Assen  
12 Dickens girl  
13 Dull  
14 Ward (off)  
15 Told fibs  
16 Alliance letters  
17 As — and breathe  
18 Frezy  
19 Aquatic birds  
20 Old Eng. coin  
21 Free  
22 Stage direction  
23 Cortail drastically  
24 Shore  
25 Commits to  
26 Sharp herring  
27 Hoagepodge  
28 Party snack  
29 Onio's lake  
30 Extremely  
31 Shortly  
32 Strite

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:  
GRAM VISTA ESTE  
LIRA ACTUP STOA  
OLIV STUNT TROP  
BLADSTONE DENTY  
AFTER TITLES  
METER PRAVABLE  
MOTED DRANS ROW  
EGOS STUNT POKE  
LEA STUCK FAKER  
TERRITISE DISEN  
HEAD TENS  
ALERT STORWALL  
RANI OFARY OBE  
ALBA PRIMO RUBE  
BAEL TYLER DEAR

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#### TOO MANY HIGH CARDS

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH  
♠ 8 6 2  
♥ A Q 6  
♦ J 7 5 4  
♣ Q 6

WEST EAST  
♠ 7 4 3 ♠ Q  
♥ J 7 5 ♥ K 10 9 3 2  
♦ K 9 3 ♦ A 10 6  
♣ J 10 9 7 ♣ 8 4 3 2

SOUTH  
♠ A K 10 5  
♥ 8 4  
♦ Q 8 2  
♣ A K 5

The bidding:  
South West North East  
1 NT Pass 2 ♣ Pass  
2 ♣ Pass 4 ♣ Pass  
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♣.

"I never hold any cards," is a constant complaint at the bridge table. Little do the carpens realize that being dealt too many high cards can be as pernicious an affliction as having too few. This hand illustrates our point.

Holding a five-card major suit is not, in itself, sufficient reason to shun opening one no trump. That action best described South's hand,



## Kuwait to allow merchants to import supplies next week

NICOSIA (R) — Kuwaiti merchants will be allowed to start importing badly-needed food and other supplies within a week, a chamber of commerce official said Sunday.

Almost three weeks after liberation, many Kuwaitis are angry at confining food shortages and the lack of running water and electricity. Most shops are closed and long lines of shoppers queue up for food.

The Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) said the commerce and industry ministry had authorised the chamber of commerce "to issue permits for Kuwaiti merchants to take food supplies and basic commodities to Kuwait as of next Saturday."

KUNA, monitored in Cyprus, quoted the chamber's deputy director-general, Akel Al Jassem, as saying merchants would be allowed to bring in supplies through Saudi Arabia.

He said merchants should provide proof they were Kuwaiti citizens and had been registered as merchants with the chamber before the Iraqi invasion in August.

Jassem said Kuwaiti merchants could accompany the drivers of trucks carrying the supplies but non-Kuwaiti drivers would not be allowed to stay in the emirate for more than four days.

He said merchants would also be allowed to import batteries, power generators, tyres and paint for cars.

## Iran offers Kuwait aid and technical assistance

NICOSIA (R) — Iran has offered aid and technical services to help Kuwait recover from seven months of Iraqi occupation, Tehran radio said Sunday.

The radio said the offer was made at a meeting in Kuwait City Saturday between Prime Minister Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah and Iranian Ambassador Hussein Sadeqi.

The radio said Sheikh Saad thanked Iran for its support for Kuwait during the Gulf crisis.

"The stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been frank, clear and wise since the beginning of the occupation of Kuwait, and we praise that," he was quoted as saying.

Kuwait's support for Iraq during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war made it the target of Iranian attacks in the latter days of the conflict.

## Tokyo stock market hits fresh milestone on upward climb

TOKYO (R) — The Tokyo stock market reached another milestone on its comeback trail as the key Nikkei index closed above 27,000 Monday, and analysts said the near-term path, though likely to hold some potholes, is clearly upward.

"The market is on the road to 28,000 or 29,000, and will arrive there in early to mid April," said Tadayasu Hasegawa, an analyst at Kokusai Securities. "We'll stop and rest along the way, but I don't foresee any falling back before then."

The Nikkei closed at 27,146.91 Monday, the highest closing level since last Aug. 16, and a little more than half-way between its historic peak in December 1989 and bottom in October 1990.

Underlying bullish sentiment was reinvigorated by expectations of easier interest rates, a continued perception that Tokyo is lagging behind overseas stock markets, and an improved supply and demand balance in the market.

The February money supply data Friday saw year-on-year growth shrink to 5.4 per cent, an all-time low. Analysts said the figure gave the Bank of Japan (BOJ) more room to relax monetary policy.

"Hopes for easier credit had been getting tired, but now they're back afresh," said analyst Akira Shimoda of Yamaichi Securities.

London's surge to historic

highs and the New York Dow's flirtation with the 3,000 level last week strengthened the perception that Tokyo is way behind.

"With core holdings in their domestic equities rising in value, Japanese stocks are looking cheap in comparison to overseas investors," said Shimoda.

Fears of a fiscal year-end sell-off by institutions eased when the final trading day for special investment funds (tokkin) before their book-closing on March 20 came and went without incident.

"Selling pressure for the last fiscal year was settled last week," said Mike Morizumi, strategist at Lehman Brothers Japan.

Buying pressure, on the other hand, is strong. Hasegawa of Kokusai Securities noted that 19 investment funds are scheduled for launch between now and the end of the month, and are likely to waste no time to buy into the rising market.

Some selling by those institutions and corporations closing books on March 21 is still expected, but is now expected to be light. One broker also said corporations are likely to do some window-dressing, buying to pump up the value of their holdings.

The drop in the percentage of margin positions that would show a loss, if closed, to two per cent from 20 per cent early this year gave more room for individuals to act, said Yamaichi's Shimoda.

Not all the news is good, however. Lehman's Morizumi

said weak corporate profits, the soft yen, and the BOJ's hard line against easing interest rates so far makes current stock prices rather high.

"We think the market is too high, and we wouldn't get in at these levels," he said. "Technically, the market could have a pull back."

The bond/equity yield gap was also quite large, Hasegawa said, with stocks yielding about 2.1 per cent and the Nikkei long-term bond index standing around 6.8 per cent.

And Shimoda pointed out that about 90 per cent of issues are trading above their 25-day moving averages, when 70 per cent is usually considered a sign of overheating.

But bullish sentiment was buying on the good news, especially the good supply/demand balance, analysts said.

"An adjustment would not be surprising," said Shimoda. "But the trend seems likely to roll right over that."

## Peru to seek similar debt treatment as Poland

LIMA (R) — Peru will seek treatment similar to that given Poland, which got a cut of about 50 per cent, in its debt talks with the member countries of the Paris Club, Economy Minister Carlos Bolona said.

"We hope that Poland will serve as a guideline and I will ask for reduction of the debt on that basis," Bolona said in an interview.

The French foreign ministry said Friday that the Paris Club, which groups creditor nations, had agreed to reduce Poland's \$33 billion debt with Western creditor nations by about 50 per cent.

It said Poland's case was exceptional due to the former communist country's "unprecedented transition to a market economy."

Bolona said, in a televised speech that Peru would seek a significant reduction in its foreign debt principal with the Paris Club, hoping creditor nations would take into account Peru's real ability to pay.

Peru owes about \$6.5 billion to the Paris Club out of its total debt of \$21 billion. Peru's ratio of Paris Club debt to total debt is one of the highest in the world.

In a radio interview Saturday, Bolona said Peru's government had to be "pragmatic" in its debt payments.

## International loan risk rules haunt Gulf states

DUBAI (R) — International rules due in 1992 forcing lenders to cover themselves against risky debt have come to haunt governments and banks in the post-war Gulf.

Money had always flowed out of the rich Gulf oil states to the rest of the world. But the costs of war will almost certainly turn the region as a whole into a net debtor.

Just when the Gulf states need money most, the rules decided in 1988 by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) will make it more difficult for them to get it, Gulf bankers said.

Battered Kuwait will suffer most.

Before the war, Gulf states bitterly criticised the BIS ruling, which lumped them all save Saudi Arabia into the same risk category as the poorest Third World nations.

Gulf monetary authorities and senior bankers then argued that they were net creditors, they had freely exchangeable currencies, they were stable, they were secure. How could they be compared to Jordan, or Sudan?

Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait cruelly exposed the regional risk factor.

"There are certainly now some real risks, political and economic," said a loans manager at a Gulf bank.

Gulf bankers said that Kuwait, which needs tens of billions of dollars to reconstruct, was pushing for a change in the BIS rules, or at least a temporary postponement.

They said it was asking for a separate designated group of countries which might have the risk-weighting amended.

"I don't think they are getting anywhere," said a senior Gulf banker.

The Basle-based BIS will require all banks within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to treat all loans to Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates as 100 per cent risk-weighted.

As such, BIS would then require the lender to cover the full loan under its other rule demanding that banks maintain an eight per cent ratio against their capital on risky debt.

The ruling is effective from 1992, the year all internal barriers come down in the European Community market, but international banks have been adjusting their capital adequacy ratios in readiness ever since the decision was made.

BIS ruled that loans to OECD nations, which include all major industrialised countries, should be zero risk-weighted.

Gulf bankers accept that the Gulf oil states can never claim to be as risk-free as most West European countries, the United States, Canada or Japan.

But they feel it unfair that the zero-risk for the OECD also included countries like Turkey, Yugoslavia and Iceland.

"I keep making the point to my colleagues that (BIS) risk weighting does not mean risk free," said the loans manager.

BIS also said that any banks incorporated in an OECD state would carry the risk factor of the host country.

While this means that an Arab bank based in London, for example, could raise risk-free money, it would still have to cover any

loans it made back into the Arab World.

As Arab banks are the most likely lenders into the Arab World, this puts a further block on lending.

"If I lend to Kuwait, I have to cover 100 per cent of the loan, no matter where I fund it from. I think a gesture should be made and this should be changed," said a Gulf bank president.

To carry more debt rated at 100 per cent risk, banks must either increase their capital, dump other similarly rated loans to make room under the eight per cent solvency ratio, or dilute the risk by taking on more zero-risk OECD debt, bankers said.

Because most banks are reluctant to expand lending under tight world economic conditions, and due to previous experience with bad loans, the last option was unlikely, they said. This means asking shareholders for more money to raise capital, or squeezing lending to other Third World borrowers.

The bottom line is that the BIS rules will push up the price of loans.

In February, Saudi Arabia came to the market for its first international syndicated loan to help cover heavy Gulf war-related payments. The \$3.5 billion loan was priced at half a point over the London Inter Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR), which is a benchmark interest rate for international lending.

Based on that price to Saudi Arabia, a similar loan to Kuwait would theoretically be priced at more than one per cent above LIBOR, a shocking rate for what was once one of the richest countries in the world, bankers said.

## Soviet Union to increase consumer prices in April

MOSCOW (R) — Consumer price rises of up to 60 per cent will be introduced in the Soviet Union at the start of next month, according to Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov.

Pavlov, who announced the impending increases in a television interview broadcast Sunday, told reporters in Leningrad Monday that full details of the rises and an parallel compensation package would be published Wednesday.

The rises, part of a wider reform of state pricing, will affect almost everything from food to furniture. But the government has promised higher wages and welfare payments to soften the blow to consumers.

"In principle we are ready to start paying compensation from March 20. Then we need about 10 days, so you can expect (the price rises) on April 2 or 3," Pavlov said in the television interview.

The measure is intended to help bring retail prices in line with wholesale prices, which have already been linked to the free market and have risen sharply. It will also cut large direct state subsidies, especially on staple foods and clothes.

The last attempt to increase consumer prices by then prime minister Nikolai Ryzhkov last year were abandoned after panic-buying led to severe food shortages in Moscow.

Meat supplies to Moscow have

already been disrupted since Pavlov unveiled the latest reforms in February as uncertainty led local distributors to hold back supplies.

Under the plan, around one-third of goods will be sold at prices agreed between suppliers and retailers.

The republics will set their own prices for certain essential goods including meat, milk, sugar and transport, but only up to a ceiling fixed by central government.

Prices of medicine, vodka, petrol and energy will be frozen.

The Soviet Union has told the GATT council it was determined to pursue its transition to a market economy, taking into account the 101-member trade forum's rules governing world commerce.

## Egypt signs \$150 m wheat deal with U.S.

CAIRO (R) — Egypt signed a \$150 million loan agreement Sunday to finance the purchase of wheat from the United States, the Egyptian news agency MENA and U.S. officials said.

Industry sources said the new U.S. financing and credits from other sources had guaranteed Egypt a steady supply of wheat throughout the first half of 1991.

Sunday's agreement will enable Egypt to buy 956,000 tonnes of

wheat and 320,000 tonnes of wheat flour during 1991.

The United States has provided Egypt with credits under a food aid programme since 1975. But industry sources said this year's signing was delayed by several months because officials were preoccupied by the Gulf war.

The financing carries an interest rate of two per cent over an initial seven-year grace period

and three per cent during a subsequent 24-year repayment period.

Wheat is crucial for maintaining political stability in Egypt, but because of a finance squeeze the debt-burdened country in late 1989 and early 1990 could no longer pay its past wheat bills.

Foreign exporters cut off credit and Cairo was forced to buy wheat with cash as buffer stocks virtually ran out.

However, Gulf Arab states began sending wheat shipments to Egypt in mid-1990 and Cairo's support for them during the Gulf war led to further aid over the last seven months.

Industry sources said the new credits would help see Egypt through the holy month of Ramadan, which began Sunday and is traditionally a period of high wheat consumption.

### AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Monday, March 18, 1991			
Central Bank official rates			
Buy - Sell			
U.S. dollar	673.0	677.0	
Pound Sterling	1256.5	1259.9	
Deutschemark	419.3	421.8	
Swiss franc	484.0	486.9	
French franc	123.1	123.8	
Japanese yen (for 100)	488.9	491.8	
Dutch guilder	372.0	374.2	
Swedish crown	114.2	114.9	
Italian lira (for 100)	56.2	56.5	
Belgian franc (for 10)	203.7	204.9	

### LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.8185/95	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1556/61	Canadian dollar	
	1.6080/87	Deutschemark	
	1.8060/70	Dutch guilders	
	1.3903/10	Swiss francs	
	33.00/05	Belgian francs	
	5.4750/4800	French francs	
	1198/1199	Italian lire	
	137.85/95	Japanese yen	
	5.8875/25	Swedish crowns	
	6.2680/30	Norwegian crowns	
	6.1700/50	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	363.25/363.75	U.S. dollars	

### WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Shares closed at their years' high with buying fuelled by hopes for a further interest rate cut and expectations of lower inflation. The All Ordinaries Index ended up 11.1 points at 1,456.8.

HONG KONG — Shares closed little changed after a day in which follow-through buying gave way to profit-taking, setting the Hang Seng Index swinging in a 48-point range. The index closed 1.96 points up at 3,724.35.

FRANKFURT — Foreign selling in a thin, nervous market sent the 50-share Dax Index 17.70 points or 1.13 per cent lower to 1,552.85. Brokers believed U.S. investors were moving out of mark-denominated securities because of the current weakness of the German currency.

ZURICH — Higher Swiss money market rates and Wall Street's lower opening pulled stocks down in lacklustre trading. The all-share SPI Index fell 8.7 points to 1,040.7.

PARIS — Shares closed a lacklustre session at a two-week low as a quarter point cut in France's benchmark interest rate fell short of investors' hopes. The CAC-40 closed down 22.58 points or 1.25 per cent at 1,777.91, its lowest finish since March 4.

LONDON — Shares briefly downward in lacklustre trading after a weaker start on Wall Street. Dealers said some profit-taking was also pressuring prices. At 1700 GMT the FTSE 100 index was down 3.6 points at 2,490.6.

NEW YORK — U.S. blue chips traded in a tight range at slightly lower levels in late-morning activity. The broad market was narrowly weaker. By noon (1700 GMT) the Dow Jones Industrial Average was off 5.19 points at 2,942.08.

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Cinema Tel: 675571

**NIJOM**

**THE PUNISHER**

Show: 12:30, 3:30 p.m.

**Play**

**"No For Despair"**

Show: 8:30 p.m.

Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:00 a.m.

Cinema Tel: 625155

**RAINBOW**

**KICK BOXER**

3:30, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 634144

**PHILADELPHIA**

**FRANTIC**

12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 2:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30

Cinema Tel: 699238

**PLAZA**

**Bus Specialists (Arabic)**

Show: 12:30, 3:15, 8:00, 10:00 p.m.

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## Rebels using tanks and heavy artillery—Cambodian government

BANGKOK (AP) — Cambodian guerrillas have used tank units and heavy artillery for the first time in their country's 12-year civil war to besiege government troops, the foreign minister said.

The claims came as guerrillas seeking to overthrow the Vietnam-backed government in Phnom Penh said they had taken key positions in the north-west after repelling a government offensive against rebel strongholds.

The rebels also said Vietnamese soldiers were taking part in the government offensive, but Vietnam denied the report.

Both sides claimed casualties in the fighting. Their reports could not be independently confirmed.

In an interview with the official Cambodian New Agency (SPK), Foreign Minister Hor Nam Hong said the three guerrilla groups had joined forces in the past few months to launch "large-scale offensives with the use for the first time of several tank units and 155mm and 130mm heavy artillery pieces against our positions."

Some 5,000 shells pounded the town of Svay Chek on Dec. 6 and another position in Battambang province was hit by up to 8,000 shells on Jan. 21, he said.

He said the guerrillas fired 62

130mm rounds on a market in the Battambang capital on Feb. 10, killing 13 people and injuring more than 100 others.

He gave no details on the use of the tank units.

He said the non-Communist forces of Prince Norodom Sihanouk and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front were closely coordinating with the Communist Khmer Rouge in these attacks. The non-Communist guerrillas deny this.

"Once more, I call on the other side to accept a voluntary ceasefire as soon as possible to promote the search for peace," Hor Nam Hong said in the interview, monitored here Monday. SPK said the interview had just taken place but did not specify the day.

China is the main source of arms to the rebels, while the United States provides non-lethal aid to the non-Communist rebel groups. The guerrillas and Western news reports said last year that China had provided the Khmer Rouge with tanks and 130mm guns, which Peking denies.

The Khmer Rouge, the largest guerrilla group, killed hundreds of thousands of people when it ruled Cambodia from 1975 until

Vietnam invaded in late 1978 and replaced it with another Communist government.

The guerrillas have accused Phnom Penh of launching the offensives of recent months. They have reported recent fierce battles near Thmar Puok, a town of about 10,000 held by the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, and Pailin, the Khmer Rouge-held gem mining centre in the south.

About 6,000 government troops, backed by artillery and 15 T-54 tanks, began pushing toward Thmar Puok on March 9, a military spokesman for the Liberation Front, Ok Serei Sopheak, said Saturday.

By late Saturday, the guerrillas had retaken all key defensive positions southeast of Thmar Puok, driving government forces at least 23 kilometres from the town and putting it outside artillery range, Sopheak said.

Government forces had shelled Thmar Puok in midweek, killing five civilians and wounding 10 others, he said. Up to eight guerrillas had been killed and 20-25 wounded, while the guerrillas had found the bodies of 12 government troops, he said.

Thmar Puok, about 20

kilometres from Thailand, was taken by the rebels in October 1989, a month after Vietnam said it had withdrawn the last of its troops from Cambodia.

Sopheak said Vietnamese soldiers were participating in the offensives both in Thmar Puok and Pailin.

But the official Vietnam News Agency, apparently referring to these accusations, said it was authorised to reject as "fabrications" reports that Vietnamese troops were still in Cambodia and fighting there.

The report, dated Saturday, was seen in Bangkok Monday.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Solomon is currently in Bangkok to encourage peace talks between the rebel groups and Phnom Penh to end the civil war. He said talks could be renewed next month, after previous talks in Bangkok and Paris ended in squabbles.

The rebels endorsed a United Nations-sponsored peace plan that calls for complete disarmament and U.N. administration in the period before elections. But Phnom Penh opposes disarmament, saying that it must defend itself in case the Khmer Rouge tries to retake control.

## Detained Lithuanian defence chief freed

MOSCOW (R) — Elite Soviet troops released the head of separatist Lithuania's Defence Ministry Monday after 12 hours after seizing him on a Vilnius street, an official at the republic's parliament said.

The official said Omon "black beret" troops freed Audrius Butkevicius about noon on orders from authorities in Moscow. His driver remained in detention and his car impounded.

Lithuania's Moscow-appointed prosecutor-general, Antas Petrauskas, had wanted to pursue an investigation against Butkevicius on charges of illegally holding a weapon, the official said.

"But Petrauskas was told by Moscow to release him," she added.

Lithuanian Deputy Interior Minister Petras Liubartas told journalists the seizure of Butkevicius "as all a misunderstanding."

Vytautas Landsbergis, president of Lithuania and architect of its drive for independence, had earlier described the incident as "an attack by hostile forces and an attempt to exert pressure."

Butkevicius, aged 30, was ordered from his car shortly after midnight and taken to the local Omon headquarters outside Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital.

The republic's deputy prime minister, Zigmas Vaishvila, was sent to the headquarters to negotiate his release.

Units of Omon, an acronym meaning Special Police Forces, gained notoriety for aggressive behaviour during heightened tension earlier this year in the Baltic region in which at least 22 people were killed.

Members of the force advanced on the Latvian Interior Ministry and were involved in a shootout in which five people died. Senior officials in Moscow criticised Omon officers and said they had not issued any orders to undertake such action.

Fourteen of the victims of the violence earlier this year were killed when Soviet troops stormed the Vilnius broadcasting tower surrounded by pro-independence demonstrators.

## Japan spurns vote on islands, awaits Gorbachev

TOKYO (R) — Japan insists on the return of all four Pacific islands captured by the Soviet Red Army in 1945 despite strong local opposition to giving them back, a Foreign Ministry official said Monday.

The Japanese government shrugged off initial results of a Soviet referendum Sunday that showed some 70 per cent of the residents of the disputed islands opposed any type of reversion.

"Japan regards the islands as its own intrinsic territory and awaits their early return," said the ministry official.

"There is no change in Japan's policy and we continue to hope that the territorial issue will be taken up when Soviet President (Mikhail) Gorbachev visits next month," he said.

Initial referendum returns showed that 70 per cent of voters on three of the four disputed islands opposed the return of one island as a goodwill gesture to Japan, the official said. About 22 per cent were in support.

Other reports from the Soviet Far East said most residents said they would leave if the legal status of the islands changed.

Questions on the islands' future were included in the regional version of the main Soviet referendum on whether to maintain the country as a "renewed federation."

Moscow says the islands are part of the Russian Republic but Tokyo says the four — Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashiri and Etorofu — comprise its northern territories.

Japan has refused to sign a

peace treaty formally ending wartime hostilities or improve economic relations with its neighbour until it recovers the islands stretching northeast of its northernmost island of Hokkaido.

Keiichi Matsuzaki, vice chairman of the League For the Return of the Northern Territories, said his government-subsidised group had expected strong local opposition.

"The residents on the Soviet-held islands are not aware of the facts surrounding the dispute so how can they be asked to decide in a referendum?" he asked.

The referendum results are expected to dampen growing expectations here that Gorbachev will settle the territorial issue when he visits Japan from April 16-19.

"Unless there is a quick solution in the next few weeks, I don't think Mr. Gorbachev will be able to negotiate anything when he comes," said Motofumi Asai, a Nihon University professor.

"The best we can hope for is that the Soviet leader could express his willingness to discuss the subject," said Soviet expert.

Anticipation is growing that Gorbachev, due to become the first Kremlin leader to visit Japan, is on the verge of making a deal in return for badly needed economic aid.

Local newspapers have widely reported that Moscow will revive a 1956 agreement to return two islands that was scrapped in 1960 when Tokyo signed the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty at the height of the cold war.

## COLUMN

### Playboy buddhist monk defrocked

BANGKOK (R) — Thailand's Supreme Buddhist Court ordered a monk to shed his saffron robes after he was found guilty of having sex with a woman follower and fathering her son. The sentence ended a year-long saga involving the popular but controversial Phra Nikorn Thammavathi, who has denied an illicit liaison with 25-year-old Onpraveena Butrkunthong. Phra Nikorn, 30, abbot of a buddhist temple in the northern province of Chiang Mai where his preaching has gained him a big following, won nationwide prominence last May when Onpraveena filed suit against him for engaging in sexual relations. Buddhism prohibits physical contact between monks and women. He denied the charges and accused her of extortion. Her charges and his denials have been featured in Thai newspapers ever since. Onpraveena gave birth to a baby boy last September. The young woman said Phra Nikorn used to hang around her house in ordinary clothes, watch pornographic videos and eat three meals a day, all activities barred to monks in Thailand, where 95 per cent of the population is Buddhist. Phra Nikorn faces arrest and six months in jail if he does not disrobe within 24 hours.

### Gays march in New York parade

NEW YORK (R) — The 230th annual St. Patrick's Day parade brought more than 100,000 boisterous Irish-Americans to New York's Fifth Avenue and there were boos, hisses and catcalls for Mayor David Dinkins as he marched with an Irish homosexual and lesbian group. Dinkins, sporting a green blazer and carrying a shillelagh — an Irish walking stick — was jeered by people in the crowd and at least one beer can was hurled at him. Protesters in the crowd carried signs saying "Dinkins, you have betrayed Christianity" and "Catholic baster." The Irish Gay and Lesbian Organisation had originally been denied permission to march but decision was reversed. The mayor, who traditionally leads the parade up New York's main street, agreed to walk with the homosexual group on condition they did not carry banners. He walked three hours behind the front of the parade with more than 100 gay and lesbian marchers who cheered and smiled. Roman Catholic Archbishop John O'Connor of New York, who had said he was against including gay groups in the parade, did not come down from the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue to greet the mayor as he normally does. The mayor was forced to climb the steps to exchange a quick handshake with the archbishop. O'Connor did greet state Governor Mario Cuomo, who walked with children in wheelchairs.

### 13-year-old boy rapes and beats 3-year-old

RICHLAND, Washington (AP) — A 13-year-old boy has been sentenced to more than six years in a juvenile institution for raping and sexually abusing a 3-year-old while he was baby-sitting. Superior Court Judge Duane Taber said the usual range of two years for rape and assault by a juvenile was too short under the circumstances. "The child must have suffered terribly," Taber said. "It makes you want to cry out for the child." The judge sentenced the boy Friday to six years and two months in a juvenile centre. He was convicted in a five-day juvenile court trial in January. The body maintained he was innocent of the attack. He testified that the girl's injuries last August were the result of five accidental falls in two hours. He said she sexually abused herself and may have received some injuries before he arrived to baby-sit. Doctors said the girl could not have inflicted the severe wounds herself, including about four blows to the head. They initially gave her a 10 per cent chance of living, but she regained consciousness. The girl, too young to testify, now moves about in a wheelchair and is partially paralysed in one arm. The family moved to Seattle. In a letter to the judge, the girl's mother said a maximum sentence "is not enough." "Right now, my baby is in her room sleeping with a tube in her nose, a splint on her arm, and I can't help her with anything. All I can do is love her and hope to our wonderful God that she doesn't remember a thing," the letter said.

## Tokyo elections may shake national politics

TOKYO (AP) — Campaigning for more than 2,500 local elections began across the country Monday with all eyes focused on the Tokyo gubernatorial race, on which governing party leaders have staked their political future.

Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu and other leaders of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) are supporting Hisanori Isomura, a for-

mer television broadcast executive, over Shunichi Suzuki, the popular three-term incumbent in the Tokyo governor's race.

Both candidates opened their campaigns Monday, plastering posters around the city and holding rallies at the Shinjuku Train Station near City Hall. Suzuki, 80, said his health was good enough for another four years in

office while Isomura said new leadership was needed to tackle problems.

Campaigns opened for 12 other gubernatorial elections and 2,521 local government and assembly elections. In key gubernatorial races in Hokkaido and Fukuoka, the Liberal Democrats, a conservative party, are trying to oust liberal incumbents.

## Tamil rebels reject key condition for Sri Lankan talks

COLOMBO (R) — Tamil rebels have rejected a key condition set by the Sri Lankan government for a resumption of talks on ending their long-running insurgency.

The government said on March 7 that it was prepared for talks with the rebels and wanted their charismatic leader Velupillai Prabhakaran to attend.

But a spokesman for the Tamil said Monday Prabhakaran would not be present.

"No way. Our leader won't be involved. The people won't allow it," said Lawrence Thilakar, a member of the central committee of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Colombo also wants to invite representatives of other political parties to the meeting and the rebels to surrender their arms.

Sri Lankan Deputy Defence Minister Dingiri Banda Wijetunga made the offer of talks soon after succeeding Ranjan Wijeratne, who was killed in a suspected LTTE car bomb attack in Colombo on March 2.

The Tigers, campaigning for 2.5 million minority Tamils, have denied responsibility for the blast.

Thilakar said talks with the government were unlikely if Colombo stuck to its demands.

"Actually our main concern is for Prabhakaran's safety. We don't trust the government and he would not be safe in such a situation," he said in a telephone interview from the rebels' Paris office.

The rebels have been represented at previous peace talks by leaders of their political wing.

Prabhakaran protected by about 150 hand-picked men, directs the rebel offensive from a jungle base in Mullativu in the north-east region. He has rarely been seen in public.

## Genscher, Gorbachev discuss Mideast, European issues

MOSCOW (AP) — German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher met President Mikhail Gorbachev Monday to discuss issues ranging from the Middle East to central Europe, the Soviet News Agency (TASS) reported.

Genscher also was expected to press Soviet officials for the return of Erich Honecker, the ailing ex-leader of the former East Germany who is wanted on manslaughter charges in Germany.

The German Foreign Minister, who arrived Sunday, earlier held talks with Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh before meeting with Gorbachev in the afternoon, TASS reported.

He began the day by meeting with ethnic Germans holding Soviet citizenship. A large number of ethnic German Soviets emigrate every year.

Bessmertnykh, in an interview with TASS after the first round of talks with Genscher Sunday, said that "everything was proceeding at a good pace" in Soviet-German relations.

TASS did not carry Bessmertnykh's comments on Honecker. But the Soviet official said last week that the 78-year-old former Communist leader was being treated for medical problems and should be treated with compassion.

Genscher said Sunday the Honecker affair has "cast a shadow" over Soviet-German relations.

Honecker, who ruled East Germany from 1971 until his overthrow in late 1989, was flown from a Soviet military hospital near Berlin to Moscow Wednesday. The Soviets said he needed better treatment for coronary and kidney conditions.

The manslaughter charges against him stem from the deaths of people killed as they tried to flee over the Berlin Wall and other barriers that divided the country until 1989.

On Sunday, the Bonn-Welt Am Sonntag newspaper, citing German intelligence sources, said Honecker was spirited out of Berlin because he threatened to release documents showing the Soviets forced him to carry out the shoot-to-kill policy. The report gave one further details.

Meanwhile a high-ranking German official Monday warned that the surprise move of former East German leader Erich Honecker to Moscow may lead others from his now-defunct government to seek refuge in the Soviet Union.

Erwin Huber, secretary general of Bavaria's Christian Social Union Party, told the Neue Presse-Express newspaper in Halle that he feared "other former Communist leaders and secret police officials will also flee."

"There is a danger that other top former Communists and Stasi (secret police) officials will also go to the Soviet Union," he said.

## Walesa to seek more U.S. help for Poland's reforms

WARSAW (R) — President Lech Walesa, proclaiming Poland's reforms as a beacon of hope for the collapsing Communist world, flies to Washington Tuesday to seek more help on the long, hard road to capitalism.

The former shipyard electrician who led the independent Solidarity union that was in the vanguard of Eastern Europe's anti-Communist revolution is the first Polish president to pay an official visit to the United States.

Now 47 and at the pinnacle of power, Walesa says Poland's free market reforms are in trouble and only the U.S. is strong enough to help them succeed and avert a major crisis.

"I want to say in the United States that the reforms Poland is carrying out are having difficulties. They have lost a bit of steam and need new impetus. They need more encouragement and cooperation," Walesa said in an interview.

During his seven-day visit, he will criss-cross the U.S., meeting President George Bush and government and congressional leaders in Washington, ex-president Reagan in Los Angeles, Polish-Americans in Chicago and Jewish leaders in New York.

At each stop, he will meet business leaders and will call on Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Walesa will tell Americans that Poland's free market experiment is not only being watched by other former Communist countries, but by Cuba, China and the Soviet Union, to see if it can blaze a trail to democracy and prosperity they can follow.

Poland's failure would lead to "darkness and disorder" in many countries and send a flood of refugees westwards.

He said recent disorders in Albania and the flight to Italy of 20,000 Albanian refugees were proof on a small scale of what he fears might happen.

"I will remind America, quoting the example of Albania and Italy, that there will be millions who will run away like the Albanians if the Polish reforms collapse," Walesa said.

U.S. and Polish officials say they hope Walesa's visit will bring increased U.S. government and private investment in Poland.

"I want to say that our reforms are good business. The reforms are building business and the American superpower should join in building this business," he said.

Bush is expected to make a major statement on Poland's request for debt relief following last week's Paris accord under which Western governments will cut by half the \$33.3 billion Poland owes them.

## Finland heading for new government

HELSINKI (R) — Finland appeared headed for a change of government after the opposition Centre Party ended the Social Democrats' 25-year reign as the biggest party in parliament.

In one of the biggest swings in post-war Finnish politics, the Centre Party increased its representation in the 200-seat parliament by 15 seats to 55, according to final results of Sunday's general elections.

It was the first time since 1966 that the ruling Social Democratic Party (SDP) has not been the largest party in parliament.

The SDP lost eight of the 56 seats it won in the 1987 election while its main coalition partner, the Conservative Party, lost 13 of its 53 seats.

"The result shows that the red and blue government cannot continue. There must be a new government," said Centre Party Chairman Esko Aho.

Traditionally, the big party which fares best in the election is asked first to try form a viable coalition.

"It is essential that the Centre Party, as the biggest winner, should get the responsibility," said SDP Chairman and Foreign Minister Petri Paasio.

"The chances the SDP will go into opposition have increased," he said, but added that the party leadership would meet soon to decide on its stance.

The election campaign focused on Finland's declining economy.

Finland has been governed for the past four years by a coalition of SDP, Conservatives and the small Swedish People's Party, which lost one of its 12 seats. The rural party, which left the coalition last year, lost two of its nine seats.

Forming a new government could take more than a month of talks among potential partners. President Mauno Koivisto, who must nominate someone to try to form an administration, left for a skiing holiday in Lapland after voting in Helsinki.

SDP and Conservative leaders said before the election that they would like to retain their partnership but they had aimed to win at least 100 seats between them. Both said they would be willing to work with the Centre Party.

Leading politicians said a broad consensus government would be the best solution.

Another clear electoral winner was the Green Party which more than doubled its seats to 10 and Chairwoman Heidi Mautala was elected to parliament for the first time.

The left-wing alliance, formed in 1989 from two Communist parties and Socialists, won 19 seats, one less than its predecessors won in 1987. Chairman Claes Andersson said the result showed the left was still strong in Finland.

## Savimbi, saying war is ending, prepares for election

A UNITA BASE, Angola (R) — Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi said Sunday his guerrillas were strong enough politically and militarily to halt their 16-year-old war against the government and seek power through the ballot box.

"The war is finished, even if there are still small attacks. It is only the last skirmishes," Savimbi said at a base of his National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) movement in the southern Angolan jungle.

"When you are strong it is time to negotiate, and when you are strong you can afford to make concessions," he told reporters at a UNITA national congress held to prepare for fresh peace talks with the government.

Savimbi said his guerrillas controlled all rural areas, where the majority of the population lives.

"There is not a single town that is not encircled by our forces. Not a single," he said.

U.S. backed UNITA has been fighting for control of Angola against the one-party government of the leftist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) since independence from Portugal in 1975.

The war has devastated a potentially wealthy southern

African country and killed hundreds of thousands of people.

Savimbi said his movement, which won an important victory over government troops in a battle at the southern town of Mavinga last year, was in a strong position from which to turn itself into a political party to contest multi-party elections.

UNITA, organised along military lines, was founded 25 years ago as a guerrilla group fighting Portuguese colonial forces.

It approved a plan at the week-long congress to turn itself into a political party in preparation for elections among the seven million population.

"We think we are going to get very good results in the elections, that is why we are prepared to make this change," Savimbi said.

Key resolutions at the congress were to stop the war by all means; achieve peace and democracy in a short time, preferably between 1991 and 1992; and to agree to change the movement's "military mentality" into a "political mentality."

Savimbi told the 3,000 cheering, singing delegates at the base of thatched huts, mud houses and underground bunkers that he interpreted a vote of confidence they gave him as a mandate to negotiate peace. Some of the

delegates earlier had voiced opposition to ending the war, UNITA sources said.

He said his officers wanted to conclude a ceasefire when they meet Angolan government representatives and United States, Soviet and Portuguese mediators for a seventh round of peace talks in Lisbon on April 3.

"We want to do all we can to reach a quick ceasefire with the MPLA. We also want to use all our political influence to get the MPLA to give a date for elections," Savimbi said.

A final communiqué of the congress reaffirmed UNITA's negotiating position, proposing the signing of a ceasefire in April and holding multi-party elections in May 1992.

The government has refused to sign documents establishing the framework for a ceasefire and introduction of a pluralist democracy unless a specific date for a ceasefire is set.

UNITA says it will negotiate this only if a date is set at the same time for the first multi-party elections.

The communiqué said if no ceasefire was agreed on April 3 UNITA would, to help the peace process along, consider the possibility of declaring a unilateral suspension of hostilities in the

capital Luanda and the second city in Huambo.

Announcing new demands, Savimbi said UNITA would want to use its existing radio station during an election campaign.

Reiterating previous positions, he said UNITA would refuse an MPLA demand that it be integrated into the government's army in a new Angola. Both armed forces would have to be disbanded and rebuilt into a single force.

He said the MPLA would have to downgrade itself into an administrative entity in the transition period before elections, with effective political authority in a country residing in an internationally-organised joint commission.

Referring to the MPLA demand that there be a three-year gap between ceasefire and elections, Savimbi said:

"At this round of talks UNITA is well-placed to make any concession to get that (ceasefire). It is only one point that we will not concede — it is about the date of elections."

UNITA officials said they were confident that a compromise gap of around 15 months was possible at the April talks.